Ἅ Ἰω
ὁ θεολόγος
Ἅ Μα
Γ ΦΑΙος
Μ Θ
Θ Υ
Ις
Χς
Ἅ Ἰω
ὁ ΒΡος
ὁ ἅγιος
ΛΟΥΚΑΣ
ὁ ἅγιος
ΜΑΡΚΟς

34 Gospel Lectionary

Middle to second half of the twelfth century

Tempera and gold on parchment

Book: 40 × 30.8 × 11.1 cm (15¾ × 12⅛ × 4⅜ in.)

CONDITION

Leather binding over wooden boards with Greek style endbands consisting of red, blue, and metallic gold thread (fully intact). Silver gilt overcover, with raised and engraved designs, attached with nails around all edges of boards and flexible linked chain mesh across spine width (with wire repairs). Parchment with yellow and white hair/flesh sides, with pronounced diagonal scraping marks. Design in excellent condition with flake losses, often occurring in conjunction with scraped preparation of parchment support. Scattered flake losses throughout.

The Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, Egypt (Sinai cod. 208)

HEADPIECES SHAPED LIKE A π (the Greek letter pi) are found at the beginning of some texts within this lectionary, but this gold-ground Deesis composition on folio 1v is the only figural illumination in the manuscript.[1] As a Gospel lectionary, the manuscript comprises readings arranged for the feasts of the liturgical year.[2] For this reason, the Deesis includes the Four Evangelists in the corners of the page, in clockwise order from the upper left-hand corner, John, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, each holding a book to signify his authorship. The evangelists are cordoned off, as are all the figures on the page, by a patterned ribbon of red, yellow, and blue. The center register presents the Deesis triad of an enthroned Christ—who also holds a book—along with the Virgin Mary and John the Baptist, both of whom stand. These flanking figures raise their hands to Christ in a gesture of entreaty. This core group is distinguished by their relative scale and the unity provided by the horizontal register on which they are disposed.

Such compositional groupings of Deesis and evangelists are not unprecedented,[3] but the solution arrived at in this Gospel lectionary is unique. The composition may derive part of its meaning from the lectionary tradition, but its visual models are not found in that context. The compartmentalization of the different figures, half length or full, is suggestive of a horizontally extended composition most commonly found on templon beams, in an arrangement similar to the beam from Sinai with Deesis and scenes of the life of Saint Eustratios (cat. no. 21).[4] Not only does the arrangement of Deesis and evangelists relate to group depictions in other media but it also reflects traditional ideas about the hierarchy of the evangelists. John and Matthew occupy the top register, while the "junior" evangelists, who were not original disciples, are placed at the bottom of the page. This arrangement reflects the order of Gospels within the manuscript. Such orders of precedence are also found in monumental art.[5] The page in this Gospel lectionary was determined, then, not as much by the textual contents as by the context in which the lectionary was used.[6]

GP

NOTES

1. On the Deesis, see Cutler 1987.
2. See Weitzmann and Galavaris 1990, p. 166; Robert F. Taft in *ODB*, s.v. "Lectionary."
3. See Galavaris 1979, pp. 115–19.
4. See Firath 1969, p. 163, where the combination of Deesis and evangelists is found, but in a different order.
5. See Borsook 1990, p. 9.
6. Galavaris 1979, p. 119; Weitzmann and Galavaris 1990, p. 169.

REFERENCE

Weitzmann and Galavaris 1990, pp. 166–70.

34 (opposite), Deesis with Four Evangelists, fol. 1v

35 | Cross with Scenes of Moses

Sixth century, Syria or Palestine(?)

Bronze with chased inscriptions

H: 112.1 cm (44⅛ in.); W: 79.4 cm (31¼ in.); Th: 1.27 cm (½ in.)

INSCRIBED

On upright: † Ἐγένετο δὲ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ τρίτῃ γενη|θέντος πρὸς ὄρθρον ἐγίνοντο φω|νὲ κ(αὶ) ἀστραπὲ καὶ νεφέλη γνο|φώδης ἐπ᾽ ὄρος Σι|να, καὶ φωνῆ τῆς σάλπιγγος ἤχι μέγα· καὶ ἐπτοήθη πᾶς ὁ λαὸς ἐν τῇ παρεμβολῇ, κ(αὶ) ἐξήγαγεν Μουσῆς τὸν λαὸν ἐκ τῆς παρεμβολῆς εἰς τὴν συνάντη|σιν τοῦ Θεοῦ (And it came to pass on the third day; about dawn there were voices and lightnings and dark clouds on Mount Sinai, and the voice of the trumpet sounded loud, and all the people in the camp were terrified. And Moses led forth the people out of the camp to meet God,); on arms: κ(αὶ) παρέστησαν ὑπὸ τὸ ὄρος τὸ Σινα. Τὸ δὲ Σινα ὄρος ἐκαπνίζετο ὅλον διὰ τὸ καταβεβηκέναι τὸν Θ(εὸ)ν ἐπ᾽ αὐτὸ ἐν πυρί. Τὰ σὰ ἐκ τῶν σῶν σοι προσφέρομεν. κ(ύρι)ε, ὑπὲρ σωτηρίας Θεοδώρας τῆς φι(λο)χρ(ίστου) καὶ ὑπὲρ ἀναπαύσεως Πρόκλου κ(αὶ) Δομετίας, ἀμήν. (And they halted at the foot of Mount Sinai. And the whole Mount Sinai was issuing forth smoke, since God had descended upon it in fire. Thine own of Thine own, we offer Thee, O Lord. For the salvation of Theodora the Christ-loving and for the repose of Proclos and Dometia, Amen.); on base of upright: κ(ύρι)ε μνήσθητι τῷ γράψαντ[ος] † (Lord, remember the engraver)[1]

CONDITION

Top flange cast separately and attached. Broken U-shape strap (now in two pieces) would have originally formed a loop for hanging. Bottom drilled out for mounting device; breaks and drill holes through front inscriptions suggest that attachment was not original. Bottom left corner, serif missing.

The Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, Egypt

THE SINAI CROSS, ONE OF THE LARGEST PRESERVED from early Byzantium, was originally ornamented with gemstones that dangled from the lower edge of its arms; preserved spikes supported candles along the upper surface. We may assume that this was one of many such donations made to the monastery and that Sinai must have had an impressive collection of medieval liturgical vessels and implements. The chance survival of this cross may be attributed to its manufacture in bronze, a relatively inexpensive material.

The epigraphy and shape of the cross suggest a sixth-century date and an origin in Syria or Palestine.[2] Similar wide, flaring arms and corner serifs appear on metal crosses from the fifth to seventh century from Syria and Egypt.[3] Because of its size and weight, it is likely that the cross was stationary, not portable, and was initially placed on top of the central templon of the church, where it may have been one of many.[4] There, its shape echoed the broad, flaring crosses of the church's original chancel plaques (see fig. 120). The inscriptions on the Moses cross from the book of Exodus (19:16–18) and from the Orthodox liturgy support the association with the sanctuary entrance. They refer to the manifestations of God—his revelation to the Israelites in the desert and the mystical transformation of the offered bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ. The celebrating priest invoked the inscribed prayer, "Thine own of Thine own, we offer Thee, O Lord," between the Words of Institution and the Epiclesis in the Byzantine Anaphoras of Saint John Chrysostom and Saint Basil.[5] This prayer is also inscribed on the sixth-century altar table in Hagia Sophia, Constantinople; the lintel of a church in Syria; the rim of a liturgical chalice also from Syria (cat. no. 36); and a baptismal font. The prayer appropriately marks a cross intended

35, detail

35. detail with Moses loosening his sandal

Figure 117
Mosaic with Moses loosening his sandal, sixth century. East wall of main church. The Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, Egypt.

35. detail with Moses receiving the Law

Figure 118
Mosaic with Moses receiving the Law, sixth century. East wall of main church. The Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, Egypt.

for the threshold of the church's most sacred liturgical space.[3] The sketchy scenes incised into the arms of the cross—Moses receiving the Law and Moses removing his sandals before the Burning Bush—replicate the mosaics on the east wall of the sanctuary (albeit in reverse order) and further associate the cross with the main church rather than subsidiary chapels (figs. 117–19; also see fig. 15).

At its conclusion, the inscription records the names of Theodora, Proclos, and Dometia and their desire for salvation. Many liturgical objects of the period commemorate donors in a similar manner. The identity of the donor, Theodora, cannot be determined.

SEJG.

NOTES

1. Translation from Weitzmann and I. Ševčenko 1963, with changes.
2. Weitzmann and I. Ševčenko 1963, pp. 397–98.
3. See, for example, the crosses from the Hama and Phela Treasures in the Walters Art Museum and Dumbarton Oaks Collections, respectively; M. M. Mango 1986, nos. 8, 65. For a silver cross found in excavations in the Temple of Luxor, see Strzygowski 1973, p. 340, no. 7201, pl. 39.
4. A similar configuration, based on a description by Paul the Silentiary, has been proposed for the sanctuary screen in Hagia Sophia, Constantinople. See S. G. Xydis 1947. Amantos (1928) recorded the location of the Moses cross in the chapel of Saint James; Weitzmann sited the cross in the Chapel of the Forty Martyrs of Sinai (see fig. 119). See Amantos 1928, p. 47 n. 2; Forsyth and Weitzmann 1973, pl. 99. Weitzmann first suggested the location above the templon in Weitzmann and I. Ševčenko 1963, p. 390.
5. Brightman 1896, p. 329, 7; Taft 1996.
6. See Weitzmann and I. Ševčenko 1963, pp. 393–94. For the altar table in Hagia Sophia, see Cedrenus 1838, p. 677c. For the lintel of Church no. 5 in Il-Anderin (Androna), Syria, see H. C. Butler 1908, pp. 50–51. For the "Tyler" or "Riha" chalice, see cat. no. 36. For the baptismal font, see Salles 1941, pp. 88, 252–53, pls. 46.2, 115.1, 115.2

REFERENCES

Amantos 1928, p. 47 n. 2, fig. 2; Rabino 1938, pp. 33, 106, no. 71; A. Grabar 1969; Weitzmann and I. Ševčenko 1963; I. Ševčenko 1966, p. 264; Washington 1994.

Figure 119
Chapel of the Forty Martyrs with the cross in situ. The Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, Egypt.

Figure 120
Chancel panel in the sanctuary of the main church. The Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, Egypt.

ΘΗΕΝΚΕΧΤΑCΑΕ

36 The "Riha" Chalice

527–65, Constantinople or Syria

Hammered silver with inscription in niello and gilding on upper turned border

H: 17.5 cm (6⅞ in.); Diam: 16.8 cm (6⅝ in.); 527.7 grams

INSCRIBED

† ΤΑ CΑ ΕΚ ΤΩΝ CΩΝ CΟΙ ΠΡΟCΦΕΡΟΜΕΝ Κ(ύρι)Ε (Thine own of Thine own we offer Thee, O Lord)

CONDITION

Before conservation treatments in 1976 the chalice was thoroughly blackened and the foot was bent. Now in good condition. It has been polished, but tarnish remains in recessed areas.

The Byzantine Collection, Dumbarton Oaks, Washington, D.C. (BZ.1955.18)

THE OVERALL DIMENSIONS, the finely balanced cup and knob, the flaring foot, and the broadly spaced and elegantly proportioned inscription make this chalice the finest of the eight from a set of liturgical church silver, reconstructed as the Kaper Koraon Treasure.[1] The words in the inscription band are common in the Greek liturgies and are reported as being used by Justinian for the dedicatory inscription on the altar of Hagia Sophia. What is even more interesting in the present context is that the inscription appears in precisely the same form on the large bronze cross at Mount Sinai (cat. no. 35).[2] The five control stamps inside the foot include the monograms of Justinian (r. 527–65) and are the earliest among the stamped objects within the reconstructed treasure.

In this type of chalice, the cup and foot were made by hammering and were attached to each other by a soldered silver collar. The whole was subsequently smoothed by a lathe. Chalices and patens are the central liturgical objects, and by the seventh century they were designated as pairs, known as *diskopoteria*.[3] However, the evidence of church treasures and inventories indicates that chalices outnumbered patens by at least two to one.

GB

36. detail from inside foot of chalice, showing monogram of Justinian

NOTES

1. M. M. Mango 1986. The chalice is said to have been found in Riha, Syria.
2. Weitzmann and I. Ševčenko 1963, p. 393.
3. M. M. Mango 1990, p. 248.

REFERENCES

Volbach 1921, p. 17, Paris 1931, no. 407; Peirce and Tyler 1934, p. 124, pl. 170; Bréhier 1936, p. 85; Ross 1962, pp. 10–12, no. 9, pl. 10; M. M. Mango 1986, pp. 144–46, no. 30.

ΜΝΗΣΘΗΤΩΝΟΥΚΤΩΝΑΥΤΩΝΤΩΝΚΝΩΝΤΥΠΕΡΑΝΑΠΑΥΣΕΩΣΤΗΣΑΓΙΑΣΣΟΥΑΝΝΟΥ
ΤΟΥΘΕΟΛΟΓΟΥΚΑΙΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΣΤΟΥΤΗΡΙΑΣΜΕ

37 The "Riha" Paten

565–78, Constantinople or Syria

Silver repoussé with gilding and inscription in niello

H: 3.2cm (1¼ in.); Diam: 35 cm (13¾ in.); 904 grams

INSCRIBED

† ΥΠΕΡ ΑΝΑΠΑΥCΕΩC CΕΡΓΙΑC ΙΩΑΝΝΟΥ Κ(αὶ) ΘΕΟΔΟCΙΟΥ Κ(αὶ) CΩΤΗΡΙΑC ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ Κ(αὶ) ΝΟΝΝΟΥ Κ(αὶ) ΤΩΝ ΑΥΤΩΝ ΤΕΚΝΩΝ
(For the peace of the soul of Sergia, daughter of Ioannes, and of Theodosius, and for the salvation of Megalos and Nonnous and of their children)

CONDITION

Fragile at rim, areas where silver has broken through, and areas of old repair. Some breaks, cracks, scratches, and dents. Gilding very worn on parts of altar cloth, and apostles' clothes. Paten very weak where flat part of plate rises to form side of dish.

The Byzantine Collection, Dumbarton Oaks, Washington, D.C. (BZ.1924.5)

NOTES

1. M. M. Mango 1986, no. 36.
2. Marlia Mundell Mango in Sotheby's 1990, lot. 43.

REFERENCES

Ross 1962, pp. 12–15, no. 10, pls. 11–13; Wessel 1964, pp. 9–18; Schrader 1979; New York 1979, pp. 611–12, no. 547, pl. 16; M. M. Mango 1986, pp. 165–70, no. 35; Toynbee and Painter 1986, no. 80; Caillet 1995, p. 43, fig. 35; Durand 1999, p. 53, ill. on p. 47.

A SYMMETRICAL COMPOSITION representing the Communion of the Apostles is inscribed into the center of the paten. Behind a cloth-covered altar, the cross-nimbed figure of Christ, shown twice, administers the bread on the right and the wine on the left to two groups of six apostles each. They stand on either side of an altar that holds a chalice, a paten, and two wineskins. In the exergue below are two more liturgical vessels. The architectural setting controls and unifies the vivid narrative created by the animated apostles. The two spiral columns that support an architrave with a shell niche mark the "holy sphere" and the sanctuary reserved for the two figures of Christ. The four, possibly five, control stamps with imperial portraits and monograms on the reverse are those of Justin II (r. 565–78).

Patens in different sizes were used to display and carry eucharistic bread. Only a few preserved plates represent the Communion rite itself. A very similar depiction of the communion of the twelve apostles now appears on a paten in the Archaeological Museum, Istanbul.[1] In a third, fragmentary example in the De Menil Collection in Houston, only Peter and Paul stand beside a polygonal altar, with a single figure of Christ at the center of the plate.[2]

Vessels and containers made of silver were fabricated on a wide scale for domestic and donated cult objects. Pious individuals presented silver implements to churches all over the early Byzantine Empire. The purpose of those donations far exceeded the immediate needs of the churches, and the inscribed votive dedications reveal the relationship between donors and their religious aspirations. Silver vessels were gifted to fulfill a vow, or—as in the case of the paten in question—to obtain salvation and commemorate family members.

From inventories, donor lists, and more than a dozen buried treasures that have been found, we gain a detailed picture of the types of liturgical implements that existed during the early Byzantine period. Nearly all of these treasures (including this paten and cat. nos. 36 and 38) derive from village, rather than urban, churches. They demonstrate the wealth of local donors and provide valuable evidence from the middle or even lower end of the social scale. One can scarcely imagine how precious—in quantity and quality—were the church treasures, enriched by imperial gifts, of the capital cities.

G.B

37, detail

38 | The "Riha" Flabellum

565–78, Constantinople or Syria

Cast, engraved, and partially gilded silver

Diam: 30.9 cm (12 3/16 in.)

CONDITION
Large loss to peacock-feather border on right. Gilding is very worn. Light tarnish overall, esp. in interstices at tips of feathers. Reverse: old solder is visible on top feather and along break at left side.

The Byzantine Collection, Dumbarton Oaks, Washington, D.C. (BZ.1936.23)

WHAT MAY LOOK LIKE A MIRROR AT FIRST GLANCE is actually a liturgical fan (Latin, *flabellum*; Greek, *rhipidion*), consisting of a silver disc with a border of sixteen peacock feathers. The tang at its base has a groove, indicating that the disc was made to be attached to a staff, probably wooden. Both faces of the disc depict the tetramorph, a four-winged creature whose wings are covered with eyes, and who has the heads of a lion, a man, an ox, and an eagle, and human hands and feet. At the sides are a pair of fiery wheels. The gilding applied to the tetramorph, the wheels, and the border enhances the three-dimensionality of the shallow relief. The four control stamps on the reverse of the tang indicate that the silver fan was stamped before it was decorated and was fabricated during the reign of Justin II (r. 565–78).

The subject depicted, the vision of Ezekiel (EZEK. 1:5, 10), is common for liturgical fans of all periods and represents the heavenly attendants that are evoked in the liturgy. Written sources attest the use of fans in the liturgy as early as the end of the fourth century. According to the Apostolic Constitutions (VIII, 12:3–4), two deacons stood by the altar and waved fans made of parchment, peacock feathers, or cloth to keep flies from the bread and wine during Mass. What may have begun with actual fans made of feathers has here been transformed into a liturgical implement of high ceremonial status.

The Dumbarton Oaks fan is said to have been found at Riha, Syria, along with the chalice and paten also shown here (cat. nos. 36–37), and all three liturgical objects are presumably parts of an original set of church silver comprising over fifty pieces. This flabellum, and an almost identical one in the Archaeological Museum, Istanbul, are the earliest existing liturgical fans.[1]

GB

NOTE
1. M. M. Mango 1986, no. 31.

REFERENCES
Dodd 1961, p. 96, no. 21; Ross 1962, pp. 15–17, no. 11, pls. 9, 15; Dodd 1968, p. 147; Kurt Wessel in *Reallexikon zur byzantinischen Kunst*, s.v. "Flabellum"; Dodd 1973, pp. 35–48, figs. 29–30, 32, 33; New York 1979, pp. 617–18, no. 553; M. M. Mango 1986, pp. 150–54, no. 32

38, detail

39 Candelabrum with Saints and Mythical Beasts

Eleventh/twelfth century

Cast bronze soldered with lead

H: 158.8 cm (62½ in.); Diam (base): 48.3 cm (19 in.); Diam (top plate): 44.5 cm (17½ in.)

INSCRIBED

Ο Α(γιος) ΓΕΟΡΓΙΟC (Saint George);
Ο Α(γιος) ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟC (Saint Theodore);
Ο Α(γιος) ΔΗΜΗΤΡΙΟC (Saint Demetrius);
Ο Α(γιος) ΠΡΟΚΟΠΙΟC (Saint Procopius)

CONDITION

Candelabrum consists of removable drip pan and plate fitted over a finial soldered to the shaft. Plate for candles lacks three of its prongs and shows evidence of former repair. Shaft (originally three separate pieces) has been soldered together and soldered to a base with three feet.

The Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, Egypt

THE FEET OF THREE HYBRID CREATURES support this tall, handsome, bronze candelabrum. Lions, griffons, and variations on the Persian *senmurv* (see detail, below left), a composite mythological creature, decorate the lobes of the base and several sections of the shaft, and bands of floral ornament twist around the large oval in the center. Directly above is a segment with medallion portraits of the four military saints—George (see detail, below right), Demetrius, Procopius, and Theodore. At the top of the candelabrum, leopards chase rabbits around the perimeter of the drip pan, and a dozen spikes for candles—less the three now missing—surround a single central pricket and candle. Though indebted to contemporary Islamic art, the ornament is Byzantine and related to twelfth-century metal bowls in Russia.[1]

The images of the four saints on the shaft are icons in this context as in any other. Placed in the upper part of the candelabrum for ease of sight and veneration, these armored warriors, wielding shields and spears, guard the lights above and what they illumine.

A possible pendant to the Sinai candelabrum may be an undecorated candelabrum of similar size and design that is presently in use in the chapel of the Sinai Fathers.[2] Known as the *manoualia dodekaphotia* for their twelve candles, such pairs of large candelabra, normally made of bronze, appear to have been a feature of well-endowed churches and monasteries,[3] but the only other examples extant are two at the Lavra Monastery on Mount Athos, of similar date.[4] Normally placed before the templon and major icons, the *manoualia* were lit on special occasions. At the twelfth-century Constantinopolitan monastery of Kecharitome, candelabra with twelve candles were set "in front of the holy icon of the Mother of God set out for veneration" on the feast of her birth.[5] In the following century, four *dodekaphotia* illumined the center of the nave of the monastery of Auxentios during the annual all-night vigil for its patron saint.[6]

RSN

NOTES

1. Darkevich 1975.
2. Height 142 cm (55⅞ in.).
3. The late-fourteenth-century inventory of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople describes *manoualia* made of gilded silver and other precious materials: Parani, Pitarakis, and Spieser 2003, p. 161 (with bibliog.).
4. Bouras 1989–90.
5. Gautier 1985, pp. 108–9; J. Thomas and Hero 2000, vol. 2, p. 697. At the Pantocrator Monastery in Constantinople, the *dodekaphotia* stood in front of the icon of the Savior: Gautier 1974, pp. 38–39; J. Thomas and Hero 2000, vol. 2, p. 741.
6. Dmitrievskij 1895–1917, p. 788; J. Thomas and Hero 2000, vol. 3, p. 1229.

REFERENCES

Bouras 1989–90; Laskarina Bouras in *DMA*, s.v. "Lighting Devices"; Ikonomaki-Papadopoulos 1990, pp. 263–78; Laskarina Bouras in *ODB*, s.v. "Lighting, Ecclesiastical"

39, detail with *senmurv*

39, detail with Saint George

40 Lamp Stand

Late tenth or eleventh century, Egypt

Cast bronze

H (with finial): 166.7 cm (65⅝ in.);
Diam (base): 38.7 cm (15¼ in.)

INSCRIBED

In three bands on the upper and lower shaft of the midsection, and at the top of the base repeat, nearly verbatim, in Arabic, "Perfect blessing and complete favor; perfect blessing and complete favor and happiness." A fourth inscription on this lamp, written in a more cursory manner, perhaps reads, "Perfect blessing to its owner."[1]

CONDITION

Three-legged lampstand consists of separate cast elements assembled with threaded rod that runs the length of the shaft and is fastened with bolts at top and bottom. Decorative motifs created with chasing and punchwork. Loss to edge of separate pan at top of stand. The candleholders on each of the trays are later additions.[2]

The Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, Egypt

FURNITURE IN THE MEDIEVAL ISLAMIC WORLD was generally portable and often adaptable to a variety of settings, both secular and religious. Stands fabricated of copper alloys such as brass—and intended to support oil lamps—are one of the most common forms of surviving furniture.[3] One specific type of lamp stand, with a wide, footed base supporting a shaftlike midsection, which in turn carries a tray, was in common use from the tenth through the thirteenth century in an area extending from Egypt and Syria to eastern Iran. Such lamp stands were made of individually cast, interlocking multiple parts and were probably intended to be not only easily portable but adjustable to different heights through the addition of balusterlike and cylindrical elements to the middle section. This lamp stand—one of a pair from the Chapel of Saint Stephen (at the Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine at Sinai)—fits within this genre (see fig. 122).

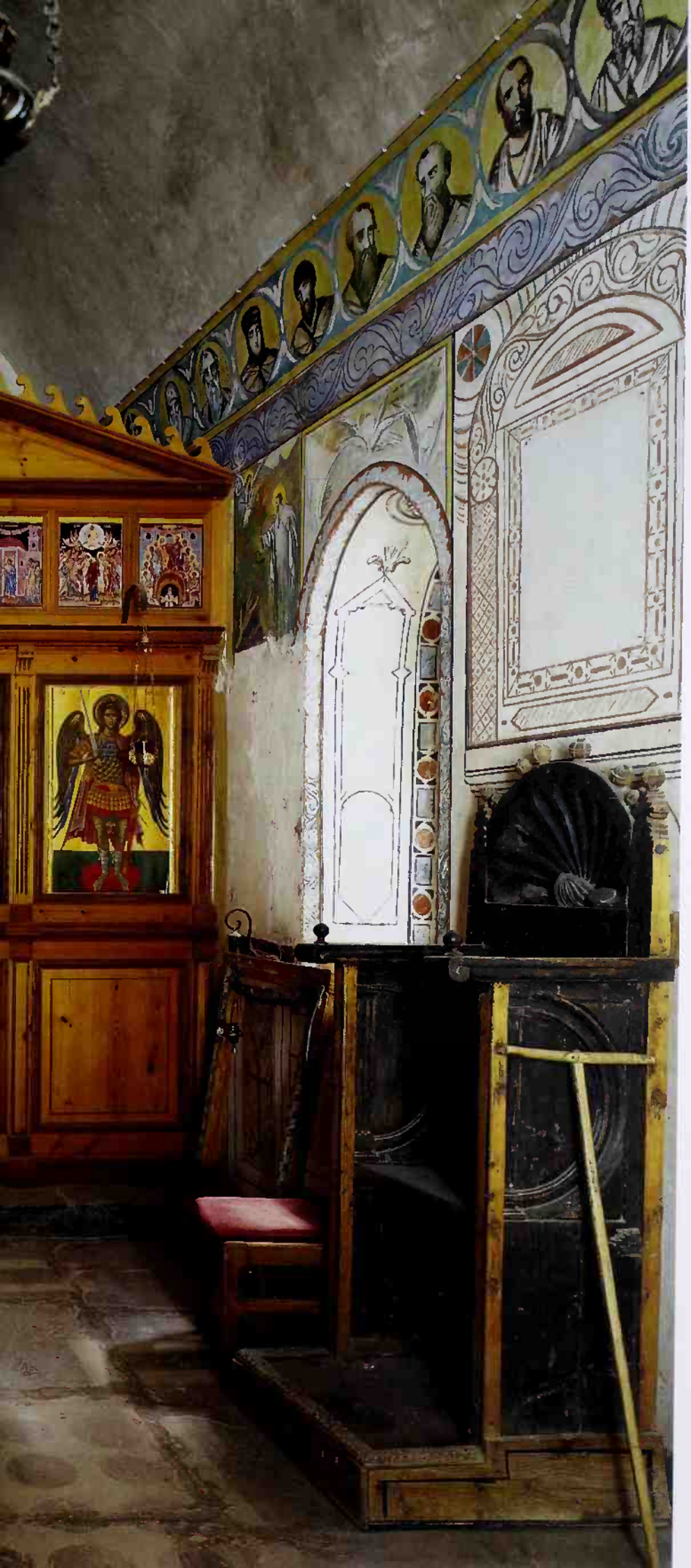
Its ornament (leafy designs enclosed by a heart-shaped device); the decorative technique (punched background); and the style of Arabic inscription (an angular Kufic script with large, broad letters and leafy and abstract designs in the interstices)—rather than the lamp stand's shape—help to associate it with Egypt under the rule of the Fatimid dynasty (969–1171), and more specifically the late tenth through the eleventh century.[4] The inscriptions provide formulaic blessings to the anonymous owner.[5]

Such lamp stands were evidently well known throughout the Fatimid caliphate. A hoard excavated at Caesarea (modern Israel) in 1995, and datable to the late tenth or early eleventh century, revealed a number of bronze lamp stands.[6] Nasir-i Khusraw, a medieval Persian traveler and writer who visited the Fatimid empire between 1046 and 1050, describes a shrine in Tyre (modern Lebanon) as being furnished with carpets and mats, hanging lamps, and lamp stands (*cheraghdan*) of gold and silver.[7]

The functionality, versatility, and evident popularity of this type of lamp stand is demonstrated by its depiction in illustrated manuscripts from late-twelfth- and thirteenth-century Iraq, where it supports several different types of oil lamps. The stands appear beside seated or standing figures, always in a secular, generally domestic context, as for example in an Arabic rendition of *De Materia Medica* by Dioscorides, dated 621/1224 (fig. 121).[8] It seems likely that this Fatimid lamp stand and its mate, although of a high quality, were probably household items that at some point were brought to the Chapel of Saint Stephen, where they were further transformed into candle holders to illuminate important icons.

LR

Figure 121
Two physicians preparing medicine, from an Arabic rendition of *De Materia Medica* by Dioscorides. 1224. Single leaf from a manuscript. Freer Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. (F1932.20).



NOTES

1. The reading of the inscriptions is based solely on available photographs.
2. One of the lamps was reproduced in the 1938 guidebook to Saint Catherine's (Rabino 1938, pl. 11, fig. 1), without any appurtenance atop the tray, while a later photograph from the archives of the Michigan-Princeton-Alexandria Expedition shows a pricket rising from the tray (see Baer 1983, fig. 10).
3. See Baer 1983, pp. 10–18, on the evolution of the lamp stand. Also, see Ward 1993, pp. 60–64, for a general discussion of the lamps and lamp stands from Egypt.
4. In the early tenth century the Isma'ili, Shi'ae Fatimid dynasty came to power in North Africa and soon expanded its authority to Sicily and parts of Egypt. The Fatimid armies completed their conquest of Egypt in 969, and in that year Cairo was founded as the new capital, becoming an important cultural center that was to rival Baghdad. From Egypt the Fatimids extended their domain to Syria. On Fatimid art in general, see, for example, Contadini 1998; more specifically on the style of Fatimid epigraphy, see Hasse 1999. Also on epigraphic style as it relates to Fatimid metalwork, see Grube 1965.
5. It is interesting to note that the choice of words is quite different from the good wishes, also in Arabic, found on roughly contemporary Iranian lamp stands and other related bronzes. See Melikian-Chirvani 1982, p. 85. Instead, the inscriptions on this lamp stand represent an abbreviated version of the inscriptions on a Fatimid bronze bowl; see Grube 1965, p. 141.
6. Presumed to have belonged to an affluent private family, for there was no evidence to suggest a mosque or other religious institution; see Tel Aviv 1996, pp. 51–55.
7. Tel Aviv 1996, p. 22, where the author mistranslates *cheraghdan* as "candlestick," and indeed lamp stands seem to be consistently misidentified as candlesticks throughout the text. See Nasir-i Khusraw 1976, p. 24. On the meaning of *cheraghdan*, as literally "lamp on stand," or a "lamp stand," see Melikian-Chirvani 1982, pp. 239, 384, although he suggests that *cheragh-paye* is the correct classical term for a lamp stand supported by articulated feet. The account of eleventh-century traveler Nasir-i Khusraw has been translated into English. Thackston 1986 (see, esp., p. 16, where he translates *cheraghdanha* as "lanterns").
8. Also two illustrations in *Kitab al-Diryaq* (*Book of Antidotes*), dated 595/1199, in the Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris, Ms. arabe 2964; see Farès 1953. Other examples occur in three roughly contemporary versions of the *Maqamat* (Assemblies) of al-Hariri in the Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris, Ms. arabe 5847, dated 634/1237, fol. 13v; in the Suleimaniye Library, Istanbul, Esad Efendi 2961, c. 1242–58, fol. 14v; and in the Russian Academy of Sciences, Saint Petersburg, C-23, c. 1240, pp. 29, 90. These *Maqamat* illustrations are collectively available on microfiche. See O. Grabar 1984, microfiche 119, 1E12, 1F3, 3G12.

REFERENCES

Rabino 1938, pl. 11, fig. 1; Baer 1983.

Figure 122

Fatimid lamp stands in front of the iconostasis in the Chapel of Saint Stephen. The Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, Egypt. Photo: Bruce White.

41 Epitrachelion with Feast Scenes

Last quarter of the fifteenth century, Constantinople or northern Greece

Metallic threads (probably gold and mixed silver alloy) on fabric support (probably linen) and red damask

304.8 × 12.4 × 2.5 cm (120 × 4⅞ × 1 in.)

INSCRIBED
Inscriptions label each scene. In the interlace at the end of the stole with monogram: MAΤΘΑ(ϵ)C IEP(ϵ)M(ϵ)NAX(ϵ)C (Hieromonk Matthew)

CONDITION
Excellent condition overall. Some abrasion and loss of the silk threads, primarily restricted to outside borders. The linen support beneath red silk and metal threads shows through in several places. The embroideries were likely remounted to a new supporting fabric at least once. Losses in selected areas reveal preliminary stitchwork. Clipped letters on one side indicate that the stole has been trimmed in the course of repair. Green corrosion product on two lower decorative pendants. Flat foil thread used for metallic borders.

The Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, Egypt

THIS PRIEST'S STOLE, OR *epitrachelion*, is typical of liturgical vestments produced in the late and post-Byzantine periods. When Byzantine liturgical vestments began to be ornamented with figural embroideries in the late twelfth century, the Dodekaorton, or cycle of twelve feasts, was a leading subject for such decoration. These scenes, which represent the Gospel story in synoptic form, were especially appropriate for liturgical costume, as they parallel the allegorical exposition of the liturgy as a recapitulation of Christ's incarnate life.[1] A number of stoles ornamented with the Dodekaorton survive from the fifteenth century,[2] and the 1396 inventory of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople describes a gold-embroidered stole showing feasts of Christ.[3] The neck of this *epitrachelion* joins the two columns of Christological scenes with an image of the Holy Trinity in the guise of the three angels who visit Abraham at Mamre.[4]

In practice, the scenes forming the cycle often number more or less than twelve, being frequently supplemented with episodes from the Passion, as here. The cycle of scenes depicted on this stole presents some additional peculiarities. While eleven of the twelve canonical images are present, the final one, the Koimesis, or Dormition of the Virgin, is missing. Furthermore, whereas the scenes normally appear sequentially, as they occur in the life of Christ, here the Baptism of Christ and the Transfiguration are placed out of narrative sequence to accord with the dates of their celebration on January 6 and August 6, respectively.[5] Finally, the Last Supper, a frequent component of the expanded cycle, is here replaced by a pair of images showing the Communion of the Apostles. Rather than narrating the event of the institution of the Eucharist, as the image of the Last Supper does, these images show Christ administering the sacrament to his disciples just as a contemporary Orthodox bishop would have done to his subordinate clergy.[6]

41 (opposite), detail

41, detail

The ornamental fields of interlace at the end of the stole contain letters spelling out a name and title: Matthew, Priest and Monk. Although he cannot be identified, the style of the embroidery suggests a tie to Constantinople. Similar ornamental interlace, sometimes including double-headed eagles, is found on a group of stoles linked to the circle of the patriarchate of Constantinople in the decades before 1500.[7] The ornamental vocabulary of the Sinai stole is especially striking. The scenes appear within interlaced roundels with crosses decorating the smaller loops between each pair. At the sides appear heart-shaped knots, which terminate in the confronted heads of birds and beasts. The tiny motifs between the animal heads suggest artistic sources remote from late Byzantine embroidery. Between each pair of bird heads is a tiny, vestigial representation of a fountain, recalling the fonts from which birds drink in early Christian frescoes and mosaics (fig. 123).[8] The other motif, a pearl suspended between the mouths of two beasts, echoes Chinese silks showing dragons in pursuit of flaming pearls (fig. 124).[9] Both motifs, of course, are here thoroughly divorced from their original cultural meanings and serve only to add richness and delight to the vestment.

ww

NOTES

1. On the narrative and liturgical aspects of the twelve feasts, see Kitzinger 1988, Spieser 1991, esp. pp. 576–78, and Spieser 1999.
2. Compare a fifteenth-century *epitaphion* with sixteen feast scenes at Vatopaidi. Maria Theocharis in *Great Monastery of Vatopaidi* 1998, vol. 2, pp. 437–38, no. 9.
3. Miklosich and Müller 1860–90, vol. 2, p. 568. Compare the stoles preserved at Staraia Ladoga and Putna in Romania (Millet 1939–47) and at Vatopaidi on Mount Athos (Theocharis in *Great Monastery of Vatopaidi* 1998). Millet published, in addition to the Vatopaidi *epitaphion*, two similar stoles from Romania—one from the monastery of Bistriţa (currently in the National Historical Museum in Bucharest) and one with the donor portrait of Alexandru cel Bun and his consort Marina (from Staraia Ladoga, now presumed lost). The latter can be dated, from its portraits, to between 1421 and 1432. Millet 1939–47, pp. 6–7, pls. 5, 8–17.
4. Genesis 18:1–15.
5. This displacement of scenes based on the liturgical calendar is also encountered on the stole of the *skenophylax* Peter at the Great Lavra on Mount Athos. Millet 1939–47, p. 54.
6. On the iconography of the Communion of the Apostles, see Walter 1982, pp. 184–96; Gerstel 1999, pp. 49–52.
7. Millet 1939–47, pp. 13–14. One of these stoles, at the Great Lavra on Mount Athos, bears the inscription of Bishop Joachim of Drama, twice patriarch of Constantinople (1498–1502 and 1504–5) under Sultan Beyazid II. Gedeon 1996, pp. 493–95, 497–98.
8. Compare, for example, the paired doves with fountains in the fifth-century mosaics of the Mausoleum of Galla Placidia, Ravenna. Deichmann 1958, figs. 26–27.
9. Compare the motif as found on thirteenth-century *kesi* panels from central Asia; New York 1997b, pp. 54, 75–79, nos. 17, 18.

REFERENCE

Theocharis 1990, pp. 238–39, 252, fig. 13.

Figure 123 (right top)
Mosaic with two birds drinking from a cup, fifth century. Mausoleum of Galla Placidia, Ravenna, Italy.

Figure 124 (right bottom)
Dragons Chasing Flaming Pearls (detail), Central Asia, thirteenth century or earlier. Silk tapestry (*kesi*). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Cecile E. Mactaggart Gift and Rogers Fund, 1987 (1987.8).

41 (opposite), detail

ΚΥ
Γ΄
ΗΑ ΑΙΚΑΤΕΡΙΝΑ ΚΥΑΕΥΟΜΕΝΗ ΥΠΟ ΤΑΓΓΕΛ

HOLY SITE

God said, "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground."
EXODUS 3:5

[In modern space] every place is equal to every other. MARTIN HEIDEGGER

The Sinai is not modern. Neither grid, graph, nor map, it is where God met Moses on hallowed ground. Icons from Sinai depict the place the monks call "God-trodden." The concluding section of this exhibition presents the monastery that the emperor Justinian dedicated to the Virgin in the sixth century and explores the monastic experience more generally. Later monks also venerated Saint Catherine. Her relics at the monastery attracted pilgrims from many regions and ultimately gave a new name to the monastery. After the Middle Ages, changing conventions of representation led to new topographical views of the Sinai.

Figure 125 (opposite) Triptych with Virgin of the Burning Bush and the Burial of Saint Catherine, sixteenth century(?) (detail, cat. no. 58).

Η ΜΕΤΑΜΟΡΦΩΣΙΣ
ΤΟΥ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ

42 Transfiguration with Scenes of Monastic Life

Georgios Klontzas

1603, Candia, Crete (?)

Tempera and silver leaf with pigmented varnish on panel

64.8 × 40.5 × 3.4 cm (25 1/2 × 15 15/16 × 1 5/16 in.)

INSCRIBED
Η ΜΕΤΑΜΟΡΦΩCIC ΤΟΥ CΩΤΗΡΟC (The Metamorphosis of the Savior); ΧΕΙΡ ΓΕΩ(ρ)ΓΙΟΥ ΚΑΟΝΤΖΑ ΤΟΥ ΚΡΗΤΟC ΑΧΙΓ. (By the hand of Georgios Klontzas of Crete, 1603)

CONDITION
Gilding restricted to upper register. Uneven varnish layers. Frame consists of applied wooden strips. All sides of panel have been painted orange.

The Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, Egypt

THIS ICON IS ONE OF SEVERAL by Georgios Klontzas that belong to the Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine at Sinai.[1] The Cretan painter never traveled to Sinai but depicted the monastery and its surrounding landscape in at least two other icons—the Spada and the Yorkshire triptychs.[2] He thus developed a characteristic shorthand for the monastery buildings and the Orthodox monks inhabiting them. Although the architectural setting is generic and classicizing, it nonetheless suggests the Justinianic monastery through the repeated depiction of small chapels and the ascending/descending levels of its pictorial surface.[3] The scene of the Transfiguration, or Metamorphosis, at the top of the icon also refers to the sixth-century apse mosaic in the *katholikon* (see figs. 15, 31). Klontzas utilizes Palaeologan iconography for his composition, with an expanded narrative to the right and left of the central scene and emphasis on the "uncreated light" that surrounds the figure of Christ.[4] Elijah and Moses, Old Testament witnesses to the Transfiguration, provide important examples for the contemplative life.

The lower two-thirds of the icon represents moments of daily life within a monastic community. Both young and old monks are included; the more venerable lean on T-shaped staffs for support. A recurring motif is the white string of beads with pendant cross. These prayer beads emphasize the contemplative practices that might achieve a vision of the Transfiguration light represented above.[5] The spiritual and physiological effects are detailed in a later account from Russia: "At first I was weary from continuously repeating the prayer. My tongue became numb and my jaws felt stiff . . . followed by a slight pain in the thumb of my left hand, with which I was counting the knots of the *chokti*. . . . Moreover, all this was somehow urging and compelling me to pray more and more."[6]

The icon, therefore, joins monastic ideals with the specificity of the Sinai monastery. Recently displayed in the Sinai monastery's Chapel of the Holy Fathers, the icon in that setting incorporates the community's martyrs as well.[7]

KH

NOTES
1. See Vokotopoulos 1986, pp. 64, 74 n. 66.
2. On the Spada triptych, see Panagiotes I Vokotopoulos in London 1987, pp. 88–93, no. 74; Baltimore 1988, pp. 154–55, 224–27, no. 69. For the Yorkshire triptych, Vokotopoulos in London 1987, p. 95, no. 75. In the most recent study on Klontzas's life and work, Vereecken and Hadermann-Misguich dated the Spada and Yorkshire triptychs to the late 1570s and the early 1580s, respectively. Vereecken and Hadermann-Misguich 2000, pp. 71–84. For another such panel attributed to Klontzas, see Lazović and Rossier 1968, no. 17.
3. The *katholikon*, or main church, of the monastery is situated at the lowest level within the enclosing fortress walls; to reach the main entrance one already has to go down a short flight of stairs. Forsyth 1968, p. 8.
4. Mount Athos was a formative center for Transfiguration iconography in relation to its defense of Hesychast theology. Millet 1916, pp. 225, 227–28.
5. The prayer beads, or *komboschoini*, accompany repetition of the Jesus Prayer developed in Orthodox Hesychasm. Their modern, secular descendants can be seen in the worry beads used by Greek men today.
6. Savin 1996, p. 16. The *chokti* is a knotted rope identical in function to the prayer beads.
7. Forty monks were massacred in the fourth century at Raithou, and another forty at Sinai. See Kamil 1991, pp. 19–20.

REFERENCE
Drandakis 1990, p. 129, fig. 99.

ΓΘΘCOB
ΔΑΙΓΟΝ
ΟΡΘΟCCHNA

43 View of Mount Sinai with Scenes of Monastic Life

Iacovos Moskos

1700–1725

Tempera and gold leaf on panel

28.7 × 39.1 × 1.9 cm (11 5/16 × 15 3/8 × 3/4 in.)

INSCRIBED
ΤΟ ΘΕΟΒΑΔΙCΤΟΝ ΟΡΩC CINA (The God-trodden Mount Sinai); ΧΙΡ ΕΙΑΚΩΒΟΥ ΜΟCΚΟΥ (By the hand of Iacovos Moskos)

CONDITION
Uneven yellow varnish obscures original color, particularly of the pink-colored mountain. Costume details executed in thin paint over applied gold leaf. Icon painted on a single piece of wood with no frame. Large horizontal split runs length of panel; front surface filled with wax.

The Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, Egypt

THIS ICON BY IACOVOS MOSKOS is a late example of a series of topographical icons associated with Sinai. The genre has its roots within pilgrimage maps and illustrations and was mass-produced by engraving and woodcut during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.[1] The views of Mount Sinai by El Greco (fig. 126, and see cat. no. 61, reverse) reflect similar influences. Large-scale figures fill the landscape surrounding the Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine at Sinai, so that Moskos's icon appears well populated. Below, a procession of Sinai monks welcomes the archbishop; two diminutive figures remain at the monastery entrance. Above, monks climb the famous Path of Steps to Jebel Musa, as others, including a pilgrim, descend the much steeper Jebel Katrina.

Just as active are participants from the sacred past. At the far left, Moses bends down to loosen his sandal. The Burning Bush, combined with the Virgin, is at the eastern end of the *katholikon* and marks the chapel where the relic of the Burning Bush is kept. The red shaft of sunlight directs our attention to the Virgin and illustrates a local phenomenon believed to take place once a year, in which light, passing through a gap in the mountain, strikes the site of the Burning Bush.[2] Moses appears a second time at the summit of Mount Sinai as he receives the tablets of the Law, while nearby, the prophet Elijah encounters an angel of the Lord.[3] At the top of the neighboring peak, angels lower Saint Catherine to her resting place and chapel.

The many chapels scattered across the landscape serve as architectural markers for these disparate events, depicted in the icon as if taking place simultaneously. The result collapses time and space and renders all sacred. For a visiting pilgrim, such commemorative and liturgical spaces would confirm his or her experiences at the *loca sancta* of Sinai.[4] The reverse of the panel includes an inscribed cross sketched in red paint.

KH

NOTES
1. It can also be compared with the painting of the monastery by Ioannis Kornaros placed on the back of the Archiepiscopal Throne (1778). On the topographical icons, see M. Chatzidakis 1940; Galavaris 1978a; Kühnel 1981; M. Chatzidakis 1995b. For paper icons, see Papastratos 1990.
2. This is said to occur at the vernal equinox, or March 25, the day of the Annunciation. See Papastratos 1990, p. 338 n. 6; Kühnel 1981, p. 198.
3. Mounts Sinai and Horeb become conflated in the Middle Ages, although the smaller peak beside Jebel Musa at times has been identified as Horeb. See Sivan 1990, pp. 58–59.
4. On the combination of archaeological and ritual spaces, see Coleman and Elsner 1994.

REFERENCES
Galavaris 1978a, pp. 334–38, fig. 7; Kühnel 1981, pp. 163–88, 193–200, 218, fig. 7; Drandakis 1990, p. 131, fig. 100.

Figure 126
El Greco (Greek, 1541–1614), *View of Mount Sinai*, ca. 1570–72. Oil and tempera on panel, 41 × 47.5 cm (16 1/8 × 18 3/4 in.). Historical Museum of Crete, Iráklion.

Ο ΑΓΙΟΣ
ΜΑΚΑΡΙΟΣ
ΧΕΡΟΥΒΙΜ
57.

44 Saint Macarius and a Cherub

Thirteenth century

Tempera on panel

38.2 × 24.9 × 2.7 cm (15 1/16 × 9 13/16 × 1 1/16 in.)

INSCRIBED
Ο ΑΓΙΟC ΜΑΚΑΡΙΟC (Saint Macarius);
ΧΕΡΟΥΒΙΜ (Cherubim)

CONDITION
Former cleaning in area of figures. Face of angel has been repainted and background shows scattered retouching. Panel has engaged frame. Reverse of panel is rough hewn, with striped design on white preparation layer.

The Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, Egypt

THIS HIGHLY UNUSUAL ICON shows Macarius the Great (ca. 300–ca. 390), a hero of medieval monasticism, and a cherub, here a four-winged and many-eyed angel. The cherub takes Macarius by the left hand, and both gesture with their free hands to the viewer's right. The cherub is a composite of angelic types, four winged like cherubim, but many eyed like seraphim,[1] as described in the saint's vita. The meeting represented here refers on one level to the interaction between Macarius and a cherub that was recounted in the seventh- or eighth-century *Life of Saint Macarius of Scetis*.[2] The *Life* narrated several exchanges between the two figures, most notably when the cherub took hold of the holy man and led him to the site where his monastery was to be founded.[3] This spectacular endorsement of the monastery greatly added to the prestige of this famous monastic leader, and the moment depicted on the icon would naturally have had a receptive audience in the milieu of the Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine at Sinai. To underline his monastic identity, Macarius is shown in monastic garb, in contrast to other representations of the holy man as a naked hermit or dressed in rich ecclesiastical garments, for instance.[4] Iconographically comparable is the thirteenth-century fresco at the Monastery of Saint Antony at the Red Sea, but this scene is rare.[5]

Yet the icon was more than a straightforward commemoration, as Macarius was also associated in the Middle Ages with a very popular series of homilies written about 400. One homily presented an allegorical interpretation of cherubic epiphany in which the cherub was identified with the soul illuminated by the Holy Spirit. "Covered with the beauty of ineffable glory of the Spirit [the soul] becomes all light, all face, all eye."[6] Devotional panels from a monastic context like this icon were polyvalent, able to signify various levels of meaning, and the sophisticated audience at Sinai, surely aware of Macarius's reputation as both monastic leader and theologian, would have been perfectly receptive to the icon's hagiographic and theological implications.

GP

NOTES
1. Byzantine artists were flexible when it came to depicting angels. See Peers 2001, pp. 13–60.
2. See Toda 2000.
3. The Coptic version has been translated recently. See Vivian 2004, pp. 168–70 (15–16), p. 178 (22), and p. 182 (27), for the cherub's appearances. The association of Macarius and cherubim/seraphim extended to other texts; see Evetts 1948, pp. 507–8, and Coquin 1975, pp. 115–16.
4. See C. Mango and Hawkins 1966, fig. 40, and Folda 1995, pp. 283–84, respectively.
5. Bolman 2002, pp. 49–51.
6. Dörries, Klostermann, and Kroeger 1964, pp. 2, 31–32 (1.2); Maloney 1992, p. 37.

REFERENCES
Unpublished.

45 Homilies of Gregory Nazianzenus

1136–55.[1] Constantinople

Tempera and gold on parchment

Book: 33.8 × 27.6 × 15.2 cm (13 5/16 × 10 7/8 × 6 in.)

INSCRIBED

In Greek on fol. 3r: The present book was dedicated to the monastery of the Holy Theotokos Pantanassa on the island of Saint Glykeria by the abbot of the imperial monastery of Pantocrator, the monk Joseph Hagioglykerites; on fol. 4r: On July 1st of the 7058 (1550 C.E.), I, Germanous monk and oeconomos of Crete, brought this book, that is the Theologos, to the divine and holy royal monastery of the Great Church of the Holy and God-trodden Mount Sinai; on fol. 437v: The monk Joseph, leader of the monastery of the Pantocrator-Logos, who made this book glittering with silver whiteness, dappled with gold, which Gregory the highest of the people-shepherds, being the mouthpiece of God, composed, presents it to the Monastery of the Pantanassa for the cleansing of his sins.[2]

CONDITION

Very worn leather binding, tooled in panel, stamped design over wooden boards, grooved along outer edges. Binding rebacked in 1997, with newly worked Greek endbands. Brass bosses on upper board; three bosses lost on lower board. Remnants of fore-edge straps on lower board. Beautifully prepared parchment, somewhat cockled at beginning and end of manuscript. Exquisite condition of miniatures, with very little flake loss. Evidence of interleaving curtains (no longer extant).

The Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, Egypt (Sinai cod. 339)

NOTES

1. C. Mango 1992 suggested 1142, with the manuscript being given for the consecration of the church at Hagia Glykeria at that time.
2. Weitzmann and Galavaris 1990, p. 140.
3. This type was adapted from ancient portraits for rendering the Christian evangelists in suitably prestigious ways. See Bernabò 2000.
4. Nelson 1987, p. 75.
5. See Annemarie Weyl Carr in *ODB*, s.v. "Anastasis."

REFERENCES

Galavaris 1969, pp. 255–58; Peers 2004, pp. 59–76.

THE ILLUSTRATIONS AND HOMILETIC TEXTS are bracketed by useful and highly evocative inscriptions on folios 3r and 437v, which help situate the creation of this manuscript in an elite, monastic milieu at the capital. The manuscript was created for and has always been used in monasteries, so it is fitting that the author of the homilies, Gregory Nazianzenus (329–389), should be depicted in monastic habit. Gregory is shown on the left-hand folio (4v) as a monk in the act of writing, in an iconography known as the "author portrait."[3]

This miniature, however, not only presents one of the great Church Fathers monasticized but also offers a complex visual display. The setting for Gregory's act of composition is a golden interior space enclosed by a richly varied field of architectural elements. Gregory's head is set off by an enamel-like halo, the design for which may well derive from Islamic prototypes. Flattened and cubistically rendered, the surrounding field nonetheless evokes a monastic complex. This prismatic setting is full, to be sure, but the gravitational center is the poised writer ready to take his inspiration from the half-length figure of Christ entering the trilobate gold ground above. The illumination creates, for the monastic user of the manuscript, a connotation of ground hallowed in the monastery where similar divinely inspired work is carried out. The manuscript may also be a disguised homage from the monk Joseph (see inscription) to his mentor, Gregorius, who tonsured him at Glykeria; in this way, the church father and mentor could be honorifically combined. The manuscript provides precious insight into twelfth-century monastic patronage.[4]

Part of monastic work was the conscientious performance of the liturgy, and this manuscript was integral in that sense, for it comprises sixteen homilies read during the church calendar. The facing page on view (fol. 5r) shows another intricately woven design, but with the scene of the Anastasis (Resurrection) at its center. The Anastasis is the paradigmatic Easter image in the Orthodox Church,[5] and here it introduces Gregory's First Homily on Easter. Both pages present icons within a book, each part of a dynamic process of making clear their holy use and affect.

GP

45 (opposite), Gregory Nazianzenus writing the homilies, fol. 4v

45 (right), facing page with Anastasis, fol. 5r

Η ΑΓΙΑ
ΘΕΟΔΟΣΙΑ

46 Saint Theodosia

Early thirteenth century, Constantinople

Tempera and gold on panel

34 × 25.6 × 2.2 cm (13⅜ × 10⅛ × ⅞ in.)

INSCRIBED
Η ΑΓΙΑ ΘΕΟΔΟCΙΑ (Saint Theodosia)

CONDITION
Excellent condition. Very minor scattered paint losses. Contours of figures incised and saint has a double-incised halo. Some retouching to abraded gold background.

The Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, Egypt

THE ICON OF SAINT THEODOSIA shows her in a vivid and individualized portrayal set against a simple gold background that embraces both the ground of the icon and its frame. The black costume and headdress identify Theodosia as a nun, while the cross she carries marks her status as a martyr. The portrayal is made more vivid by strong features, subtle shadows, color modeling, and the vivid highlights that give structure and mass to both face and hands. It is an excellent example of Constantinopolitan painting from the first decades of the thirteenth century.[1]

This icon is the finest of the five icons of Theodosia to be found at Sinai.[2] Together, they testify to the popularity of this saint's cult there. Theodosia's origins lie in the period of Iconoclasm, when she emerged as a probably mythical symbol of resistance to the Iconoclastic policies of Leo III. Her cult is known from the tenth century on and was especially strong during the early fourteenth century. She was renowned as a source of healing. Notably, Constantine Akropolites composed a new version of Theodosia's life, which concluded with accounts of her miracles, including his own healing and that of his son-in-law. This healing power continued to be celebrated until the Fall of Constantinople in 1453. Indeed, many citizens of Constantinople were celebrating her feast day at her shrine on May 29, 1453, when the Ottoman Turks captured the city.[3]

The quality of this image and the Constantinopolitan identity of this saint suggest that the icon might have been brought from that sacred city to Sinai, providing a trace of Constantinople's holy powers in that distant location and offering access to Theodosia's particular qualities as a healing saint. The presence of four other images of Theodosia from this period at Sinai suggests her popularity there. The scale of the panel, including the thickness of the board (2.2 cm [⅞ in.]), suggests that this icon might have been intended for the *proskynetarion*, a stand used for the display and veneration of icons on a given saint's feast day.[4]

CB

NOTES
1. Mouriki 1994, p. 213.
2. Mouriki 1994.
3. Constas 1998.
4. Mouriki 1994, p. 213.

REFERENCES
Mouriki 1990, pp. 111, 168, fig. 39, and p. 386 n. 52; Galavaris 1993–94; Mouriki 1994; Constas 1998; Anastasia Drandaki in New York 2004, p. 383, no. 238.

ΑΓΙΟΣ
ΙΩ
ΟΤΣΚΛΙ
ΠΑΚΟΣ

47 Saint John Climacus

Fifteenth century

Tempera and gold with pigmented varnish on panel

23.5 × 18.8 × 2.2 cm (9¼ × 7⅜ × ⅞ in.)

INSCRIBED
Ο ΑΓΙΟC Ιω(άννης) Ο ΤΙC ΚΛΙΜΑΚΟC
(Saint John of the Ladder)

CONDITION
Very good condition. Double-lined, incised halo. Loss to varnish layer(s) has created uneven appearance to gold background. Gilding originally went to outer edge of frame (red-painted border at front covers gilding). Orange paint added to outer edge of frame. Some abrasion in hood of saint at top center. Discolored and uneven varnish.

The Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, Egypt

SAINT JOHN CLIMACUS (before 579–ca. 650), one of the most venerated holy figures in Byzantine monasticism, is prominently commemorated on the fourth Sunday of Lent. A hermit and monk for forty years, he later became the abbot of the Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine at Sinai and, during his tenure, wrote the influential treatise *The Heavenly Ladder* (see cat. nos. 33, 49; see also cat. no. 48). In it he teaches monks how to attain spiritual perfection through thirty actual steps of the ladder. He is frequently depicted in the prefatory miniatures to the *Ladder*, leading the brethren to paradise, but iconic portraits of John Climacus are rare[1]—hence the significance of the Sinai panel.

In the icon, the saint wears a monastic cape, called a *kokoulion*, as well as a three-buttoned cape, or *mandyas*. He holds his text as a rolled-up scroll in one hand and blesses with the other. His gaze, directed slightly to the right, suggests that ultimate authority and salvation rest with Christ, with whom the saint is an intercessor. He is a conduit through which divine blessing is dispensed to the faithful. His monastic garb and gaunt face emphasize that salvation entails adherence to the strict rules of abstinence and dispassion codified in his treatise.[2] As the saint says in his *Heavenly Ladder*, "A monk is shaped by virtues in the way that others are shaped by pleasures. A monk has unfailing light in the eye of the heart. A monk is an abyss of humility in which every evil spirit has been plunged and smothered."[3]

BP

47, reverse

NOTES
1. Sinai cod. gr. 417, from the tenth century, offers an earlier example of such an image. This iconic portrait differs from the numerous images showing the saint in the act of writing. Martin 1954, fig. 1 (iconic), and figs. 14, 16, 18, 24, 25, 69, 180 (author portraits).
2. For the use of emaciated, bodiless forms in the depiction of monks and ascetics, see Maguire 1996, pp. 66–74.
3. Luibheid and Russell 1982, p. 209.

REFERENCES
G. Sotiriou and M. G. Sotiriou 1956–58, vol. 1, fig. 238, and vol. 2, p. 208; Nancy P. Ševčenko in New York 2004, pp. 383–84, no. 239.

48 The Heavenly Ladder of Saint John Climacus

Late twelfth century

Tempera and gold on panel

41.3 × 29.9 × 2.1 cm (16¼ × 11¾ × 13/16 in.)

INSCRIBED

O(σιος) Ἰω(άννης) Ὁ ΤΗϹ ΚΛΙΜΑΚΟϹ (Holy John of the Ladder); O[σιος] ΑΝΤΩΝΙΟϹ ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙϹΚΟΠΟϹ (Holy Antonios Archbishop); on reverse: Ἰ(ησοῦ)Ϲ Χ(ριστὸ)Ϲ ΝΙΚΑ (Jesus Christ conquers)

CONDITION

Figures painted over gold ground except for figures at lower right placed directly over preparation layer. Incised halos and wing for angels. Warm-colored, pigmented varnish used to create detail on God's robe, Antonios's costume, and angel's wing. Minor loss to paint films. Strip of wood added to top of panel.

The Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, Egypt

SAINT JOHN CLIMACUS'S WIDELY PUBLISHED TREATISE, *The Heavenly Ladder*,[1] describes the process of achieving spiritual salvation in thirty steps (see also cat. nos. 33, 47, 49). The present image from the Sinai monastery offers the earliest extant icon illustrating this text and also depicting its author. It borrows its composition from prefatory miniatures in eleventh- and twelfth-century manuscripts of the *Ladder*,[2] visually defining the path to heaven as a ladder with thirty rungs.

The dynamic diagonal of the ladder separates the field into two spheres: heaven and earth. As the monks begin their ascent, their faces and their hands, raised in prayer, are directed toward their salvific goal: Christ. John Climacus at the top of the ladder serves as the model of attaining perfection. His victory against temptations is also reinforced by the image of the triumphant cross on the back of the icon.[3] However, the path is perilous and success is not ensured; the monks' ascent is stalked with temptations and sins depicted as devils with their bows drawn, ready to loose arrows. A few of the brethren fall prey to these snarls; they are dragged by devils using black chains and thrown into the mouth

48, reverse

NOTES

1. Also called *The Ladder of Divine Ascent* and *Ladder of Paradise*.
2. Martin 1954, figs. 12–13, 15, 17, 31, 66–67, 133, 179.
3. Similarly, a number of chapters in the *Heavenly Ladder* finish with the image of the victory crown: step nos. 8, 13, 14, 15, 26 in Luibheid and Russell 1982, pp. 131, 164, 170, 186, 251.
4. Luibheid and Russell 1982, pp. 78, 91, 104, 108–10, 118, 159, 174, 184–85, 194–95, 209, 243–44, 248, 271–72.
5. Luibheid and Russell 1982, pp. 74, 96–98, 111, 181, 195, 235.
6. On textiles and liturgical vestments, see Woodfin 2004, pp. 295–98 (with recent bibliog.).
7. Mouriki 1990, pp. 107–8.
8. For the role of the Holy Cross in imperial ideology, see the discussion on the Limburg *Staurotheke* (container of relics of the Holy Cross), Klein 2004, pp. 105–12.

REFERENCES

Martin 1954; Mouriki 1990, pp. 107, 155, fig. 24; Belting 1994, pp. 272–73; Corrigan 1996; Kathleen Corrigan in New York 1997a, pp. 376–77, no. 247.

Ο ΠΟΛΙΤΙΣ ΚΑΙ ΗΛΙΑΣ
Ο ΑΝΤΩΝΙΟΣ ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙ. ΣΚΗΤΗΣ

of Hades. This visualization of the monks' bitter battles against temptation is a frequent metaphor in the *Ladder*.[4]

To counteract this danger, a second group of brethren has assembled at the lower right; they raise their hands in supplication to the angelic host at the upper left. This second diagonal of the composition reveals how penance and prayers literally and physically pass through the field of battle, lending support to the virtuous and penitent. A particular concept of salvation emerges: a cenobitic life based on prayer, penance, and virtue as a means to salvation. The angelic host above mirrors the righteous monks below, just as the virtuous brethren are often compared to obedient angelic beings in the *Heavenly Ladder*.[5]

The figures next to Christ at the top of the ladder are identified by name: Saint John Climacus and Holy Antonios, the archbishop. The latter's prominent place and costume separate him from the monastic community; he wears sparkling *epimanikia* (cuffs) and *epitrachelion* (sash) of interwoven gold and silk.[6] His high social status matches the lavish decoration on the back of this icon. It features a cross of victory, outlined with a string of pearls and set inside the central medallion of a series of interlocking roundels. This geometric pattern is reminiscent of luxury silks and also appears on the contemporary Sinai icon of the Annunciation (cat. no. 13) and on two tetraptychs.[7] The inscription on the *Heavenly Ladder of John Climacus*, "Jesus Christ conquers," further links this image with the sphere of the elite.[8] The associations with luxury silks and imperial symbols on the back of the icon and the glittering golden clothes and prominent position of the archbishop Antonios on the front suggest that he was either the donor or the recipient of this icon. While offering a quintessential image of ascent to spiritual perfection, this devotional icon paradoxically also displays a taste for luxury.

BP

48 (opposite), detail with Christ

48 (below), detail with devils

صورة سلم الفضايل والرهبان الصاعدين في درجاته العمل وتنال الشياطين لهم ومنحط المتوانيين الى الجحيم

49 *The Heavenly Ladder* (in Arabic)

Saint John Climacus (before 579–ca. 650)

1612, Sinai (?)

Tempera and gold on paper

Book: 30.5 × 22 × 4.8 cm (12 × 8⅝ × 1⅞ in.)

INSCRIBED

Main inscription on fol. 13r:
صورةُ سلّم الفضائل و الرهبانِ الصاعدينَ في درجات العمل
و قتال الشياطين لهم و هبوط المتوانين إلى الجحيم
(Image of the ladder of virtues, of the monks ascending on the rungs of [good] works, of the devils' battle against them, and of the fall of the flagging to hell); top-right caption: صورةُ جسد كاترينا (Image of the body of Catherine); center-right caption: صورةُ العفيفة (Image of the chaste one); bottom-right caption: صورةُ موسى (Image of Moses); bottom-left caption: يوحنّا (John)[1]

SCRIBAL COLOPHON

"This book was finished at the hand of the poorest of the servants of God the High, Thabit, the Christian priest from Hama, and that took place about the beginning of the month of Tishrin I [October], in the year seven thousand and hundred and twenty, corresponding to the month of Ramadan of the [Muslim] year 1020."[2]

CONDITION

Undecorated, very worn leather binding over pasteboard covers (warped). Greek-style binding has worked chevron endbands. Paper spine labels chipped. Textblock consists of Arabic paper, burnished. First quire is water damaged through lower two-thirds of the folio. Scattered edge tears and staining throughout. Black text ink in good condition. Considerable abrasion and flake losses in illuminations and gilded backgrounds.

The Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, Egypt (Sinai cod. Arab 343)

THIS SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY MANUSCRIPT translates the words and the images of Saint John Climacus's *The Heavenly Ladder* for Arabic-speaking monks, most likely at Saint Catherine's monastery at Sinai. This manuscript has two illuminations (opposite and below). The initial author portrait follows medieval Greek conventions (see below).[3] John Climacus, though dressed in Muslim style, begins to write his text on the left page, as is proper for Greek, rather than from the right, as in Arabic. He is seated on a bench before a desk, unlike representations of Muslim scribes, who sit on the floor.[4]

The colorful full-page miniature of the Heavenly Ladder, shown here, similarly adapts Byzantine models. As in the late-twelfth-century icon reproduced earlier (see cat. no. 48), the monks on the ladder are tormented, and some are being dragged to the mouth of hell below. At the summit, Jesus leads John Climacus to heaven, represented not as a quadrant of a circle but as a paradisiacal landscape, visually defined as the Sinai. A diminutive Moses at the right kneels before the tear-shaped flames of the Burning Bush with the Virgin and Child inside, as angels above kneel before the body of Saint Catherine wrapped in a red garment (e.g., see cat. no. 43). In the lower left corner, John Climacus appears with monks before the monastery of Saint Catherine with its mosque minaret[5] and grapples with a devil forcing a monk into hell. These references indicate that the scene of spiritual contest is no longer taking place in a generalized sacred landscape but at Sinai itself.

The Ottoman illuminator introduced many features to suit contemporary audiences. Monks mount the ladder from the lower right—not left, as in the earlier icon—and thus follow the direction of the Arabic script. Pastel devils of Ottoman illumination with spots replace the black demons of Byzantium,[6] and the small human-headed figure of hell gives way to a Chinese-inspired dragon of Islamic illumination.[7] Jesus has an Islamic flame halo, and the Virgin and Child are nestled in flames like Ottoman depictions of Abraham in the fire.[8] Probably executed at Saint Catherine's, based on the visual references to Sinai, the illumination is a provincial variant of Persian-derived illumination in the larger region.[9]

RSN

NOTES

1. The Arabic texts have kindly been transcribed and translated by Dr. Simon O'Meara and Professor Dimitri Gutas.
2. Weitzmann 1973, p. 31 n. 114
3. Weitzmann 1973, fig. 45.
4. E.g., Atasoy and Çağman 1974, pl. 43.
5. Weitzmann 1973, p. 32.
6. And 1998, pp. 245–48. I thank Dr. Persis Berlekamp for the loan of this book and for generous guidance.
7. And 1998, pp. 35, 154.
8. And 1998, p. 141; Milstein 1990, pp. 12–13.
9. Atil 1984; Milstein 1990, pp. 12–13

REFERENCES

Atıya 1955, p. 9; Weitzmann 1973, pp. 31–32.

49 (opposite), *The Heavenly Ladder*, fol. 13r

49, John Climacus writing, fol. 13v

50 Double-Sided Icon with Saints Sergius and Bacchus, and with the Virgin

1260s–70s, County of Tripoli, or Sinai

Obverse: Tempera and metal leaf with pigmented varnish on panel; reverse: tempera and silver-colored metal leaf with pigmented varnish on panel

95.3 × 62.9 × 4 cm (37½ × 24¾ × 1⅝ in.)

INSCRIBED

Obverse: ΜΗ(τη)Ρ Θ(εο)Υ (Mother of God); Ι(ησοῦ)C Χ(ριστό)C (Jesus Christ); reverse: Ο Α(γιος) CΕΡΓΙΟC (Saint Sergius); Ο Α(γιος) ΒΑΚΧΟC (Saint Bacchus)

CONDITION

Obverse: The equestrian saints are in good condition despite losses on the borders and a large, vertical crack at the middle. Reverse: Extensive loss to the painted surface. Scattered retouching to painted surface and regilding. Two wooden strips are attached to the bottom edge of panel. Tongue-and-groove joinery with I-shaped void at center suggests additional mount could have been used for object.

The Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, Egypt

OF THE THIRTEENTH-CENTURY ICONS at the Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine at Sinai, a large number depict soldier saints, including equestrian saints, for in the era of the Crusades, there was a surge in the devotion to saints such as George, Demetrius, and Theodore.[1] Saints Sergius and Bacchus, often depicted together, had been venerated since the early Byzantine period, especially among the Christians of Syria, as they'd been Roman soldiers martyred at Rusafah in the early fourth century.[2] This brilliant, two-sided icon has frequently been identified as the product of a Veneto-Crusader atelier at Acre, recently called the Workshop of the Soldier Saints.[3] But new research points to a different identification, supporting other proposals that stress Syrian and Cypriot characteristics.[4] Stylistic comparisons with frescoes at Syrian and Lebanese sites—including frescoes of equestrian saints—argue that, like the frescoes, the Sinai icon was by a Syrian painter, perhaps working for Syrian Orthodox or Melchite

50, reverse

Figure 127 (above left)
Virgin Hodegetria, ca. 1260. Tempera and metal leaf on panel, 111 × 80 cm (43¾ × 31½ in.). Theotokos Monastery, Kaftoun, Archdiocese of Mount Lebanon

Figure 128 (above right)
Baptism, thirteenth century (reverse of fig. 127). Tempera and metal leaf on panel.

Figure 129 (right)
Fresco with Saint Bacchus, 1208. Deir Mar Musa al-Habashi, Syria.

NOTES

1. Folda 2005, pp. 329–30.
2. Walter 2003, 146–62; Fowden 1999, pp. 7–17, 175–91.
3. Jaroslav Folda in New York 2004, pp. 374–75, no. 230; Folda 2005, pp. 338–42, 532–33, 559.
4. Mouriki 1985–86, pp. 68–70, figs. 62–65; Mouriki 1990, p. 119.
5. Immerzeel 2004.
6. Immerzeel 2003.
7. Helou 2003.
8. Yuri Piatnitsky in Saint Petersburg and London 2000, pp. 239–41, no. 857, and pp. 252–54; Hunt 1991; Jaroslav Folda in New York 2004, p. 374, no. 229; Folda 2005, p. 559.
9. Elka Bakalova in New York 2004, p. 353.

REFERENCES

G. Sotiriou and M. G. Soutiriou 1956–58, vol. 1, figs. 185–86, and vol. 2, pp. 170–71; Weitzmann 1984a, pp. 143–84, figs. 3, 4; Mouriki 1985–86, pp. 68–70, figs. 63–64; Mouriki 1990, pp. 119, 192, fig. 66; Yuri Piatnitsky in Saint Petersburg and London 2000, pp. 252–54, no. 863; Dodd 2001, pp. 114–17; Gerstel 2001, pp. 263–85, fig. 5; Nada Helou 2003, pp. 101–31, figs. 6, 7; Immerzeel 2003, pp. 265–86, pl. 6; Evans 2004, p. 75; Jaroslav Folda in New York 2004, pp. 374–75, no. 230; Immerzeel 2004, pp. 29–60, figs. 3–4; Folda 2005, pp. 17–18, 338–42, 532–33, 559, figs. 197, 198.

Figure 130
Virgin Blachernitissa, 1260/70. Tempera and gold leaf on panel, 99.2 × 67 cm (39 1/16 × 26 3/8 in.). The Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, Egypt.

Byzantine Orthodox) churches in the County of Tripoli (fig. 129).[5] Also striking is the similarity between the Virgin of this Sinai icon and the Virgin on a two-sided icon at Kaftoun, Lebanon, dated to around 1260 (fig. 127).[6] The situation is complex, for the Baptism of Christ on the verso of the Kaftoun icon shares stylistic and iconographic motifs with other icons at Sinai (fig. 128).[7] In addition, two images at Sinai—a large Virgin and Child Blachernitissa (fig. 130) and a small panel of Saint Sergius with a female donor—seem to have been produced in the same atelier as the present two-sided Sergius and Bacchus.[8] Moreover, the Virgin Blachernitissa has embossed circles in its gold ground like others found in earlier Sinai images that suggest it was made in close proximity to Saint Catherine's.[9] Thus, it is possible that painters working in the province of Tripoli also worked at Sinai. In contrast, the small image of Saint Sergius seems more likely to have been commissioned for personal use by the donor and offered as a gift on pilgrimage. In the same way, the large two-sided icon might originally have been intended for a Syrian Orthodox or a Melchite church, even as a processional icon, and subsequently presented to Saint Catherine's monastery by an individual or community.

RWC

51 Moses Removing His Sandals before the Burning Bush

Early thirteenth century, Sinai

Tempera and metal leaf over textile on panel

100.5 × 65.7 × 3.1 cm (36⁹⁄₁₆ × 25⅞ × 1³⁄₁₆ in.)

INSCRIBED

[Ε]ΚΑΛΕΣΕΝ ΑΥΤΟΝ [κύριος ἐκ τ]ΟΥ ΒΑΤΟΥ [λέ]ΓΩΝ ΜΩΗΣΗ ΜΩΗΣΗ [ὁ δ]Ε ΕΙΠΕΝ ΤΙ Ε[στιν; ὁ δὲ εἶπ]ΕΝ ΜΗ . . . (The Lord called him out of the bush, saying, Moses, Moses; and he said, What is it? And he said . . . [EXOD. 3:4–5])

CONDITION

Severe abrasion to entire surface, revealing textile support. Figure of Moses has a double-lined incised halo. Loss of inscription in upper right. Donor figure thinly painted over gold. Engaged frame with additional strips added to top and bottom.

The Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, Egypt

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF GOD'S REVELATION to Moses, as told in the Hebrew Bible, for the location of the Sinai monastery and for the life of its monastic community is revealed in the large number of works devoted to the theme of Moses before the Burning Bush. The association of the Burning Bush with the Virgin Mary, to whom the monastery was initially dedicated, provided further impetus for the representation of this theme.[1] Images of Moses before the Burning Bush are found in the earliest decoration of the church—in its great sanctuary mosaic and in a humble bronze cross (cat. no. 35).

The thirteenth-century panel depicting Moses removing his sandals—paired with another representing Moses receiving the tablets of the Law—is the most faithful late copy of the sixth-century mosaic. Scholars have ascribed the two icons to the hand of a Constantinopolitan painter who, in light of the fidelity of the copy, must have worked at Sinai. Of interest is the representation of a kneeling male figure at the left edge of the lower frame. Wearing a turban, this figure has been identified as a Melchite Arab, a member of the Orthodox Christian population that lived in the region. In all likelihood, the diminutive figure was the donor of the panel and its companion piece.[2]

Icons of Moses found at the monastery are of varying size and shape and served a number of purposes, from private devotional works to the adornment of bema doors (cat. no. 22). While lay visitors to the monastery would have envisioned the biblical theophany through its representation, the image of Moses before the Burning Bush would have held special meaning for the religious community. Within a century of this icon's creation, the scene was commonly represented in Orthodox monastic churches, particularly in subsidiary spaces.[3] Mentions in textual sources suggest that representations of Moses before the Burning Bush may have been even more widespread than suggested by the preserved visual evidence.[4] The proliferation of images of Moses before the Burning Bush in the late Byzantine period may have reflected changes in monastic spirituality—changes that would have been felt at Sinai, as well. Due to his extreme asceticism, Moses is viewed in Byzantine texts of the late period as a monastic exemplar. The religious community at Sinai could not have failed to recall him wandering through the desert, a rough topography that they held in common. So, too, Moses' reception of God's voice through the medium of the Burning Bush was a story that would have resonated with monks, who sought to encounter the divine light through sustained prayer, in imitation of the Old Testament prophet.[5]

SEJG

Figure 131
Moses Receiving the Law, early thirteenth century. Tempera on panel, 87.6 × 65.1 cm (34½ × 25⅝ in.). The Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, Egypt.

NOTES

1. See Kristen M. Collins, "Visual Piety and Institutional Identity at Sinai," herein.
2. See Garidis 1993–94; Mouriki 1991–92, p. 184.
3. Among others, the Church of the Savior in Chora (Constantinople); Saint Nicholas Orphanos (Thessaloniki); and the Church of the Archangel Michael (Lesnovo, Macedonia). See also Roussanova 2005.
4. For example, the late Byzantine court poet Manuel Philes composed two short poems on Moses before the Burning Bush and Moses receiving the Law. In all likelihood, these poems were inspired by paintings of these subjects; Miller 1967, vol. 1, p. 266.
5. According to Theoleptos of Philadelphia, writing in the early fourteenth century, a monk "following the example of Moses, ascends the mountain of divine knowledge, is deemed worthy of the divine theophany, hears the divine voice and receives the law of the Spirit"; Smilkowicz 1992, pp. 112–15.

REFERENCES

G. Sotiriou and M. G. Sotiriou 1956–58, vol. 1, fig. 160, and vol. 2, pp. 140–41; Weitzmann 1978, pp. 36, 75, pl. 18; Mouriki 1990, pp. 110–11, 166, fig. 36; Mouriki 1991–92; Garidis 1993–94; Nancy P. Ševčenko in New York 1997a, pp. 379–80, no. 250.

459

52 | Moses with the Virgin and Child

Thirteenth century

Tempera and gold on panel

23.2 × 19.1 × 1.9 cm (9⅛ × 7½ × ¾ in.)

INSCRIBED

Obverse: Ο ΠΡΟΦΗΤΗΣ ΜΩΥΣΗΣ (Prophet Moses); ΜΗ(τη)Ρ Θ(εο)Υ (Mother of God); reverse: Ι(ησοῦ)Σ Χ(ριστὸ)Σ ΝΙΚΑ (Jesus Christ conquers)

CONDITION

Decorative border repainted over black-colored paint layer. Several areas around the figures' feet have been repaired with infills. Exterior profile of top and bottom engaged frame slightly raised.

The Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, Egypt

NOTES

1. See Mouriki 1988, pp. 337–38, for Kyriotissa iconography at Sinai; Weitzmann 1974, p. 39. The other figures represented are Abraham, Isaiah, Joachim, and Symeon; and Saints Theodore, George (twice), and Sabas (twice). One of the Sabas icons was taken to Kiev in the nineteenth century and was subsequently lost in World War II, for which see Etingof 2005, pp. 661–62.
2. Mouriki 1988, p. 338; Mouriki 1990, p. 113.
3. Weitzmann 1975, pp. 56–57, figs. 23–24.
4. Weitzmann 1974, p. 39.
5. Mouriki 1990, p. 109.
6. J. Thomas and Hero 2000, vol. 1, pp. 156, 176.

REFERENCES

Weitzmann 1974, p. 53; O. E. Etingof 2005, pp. 661–62.

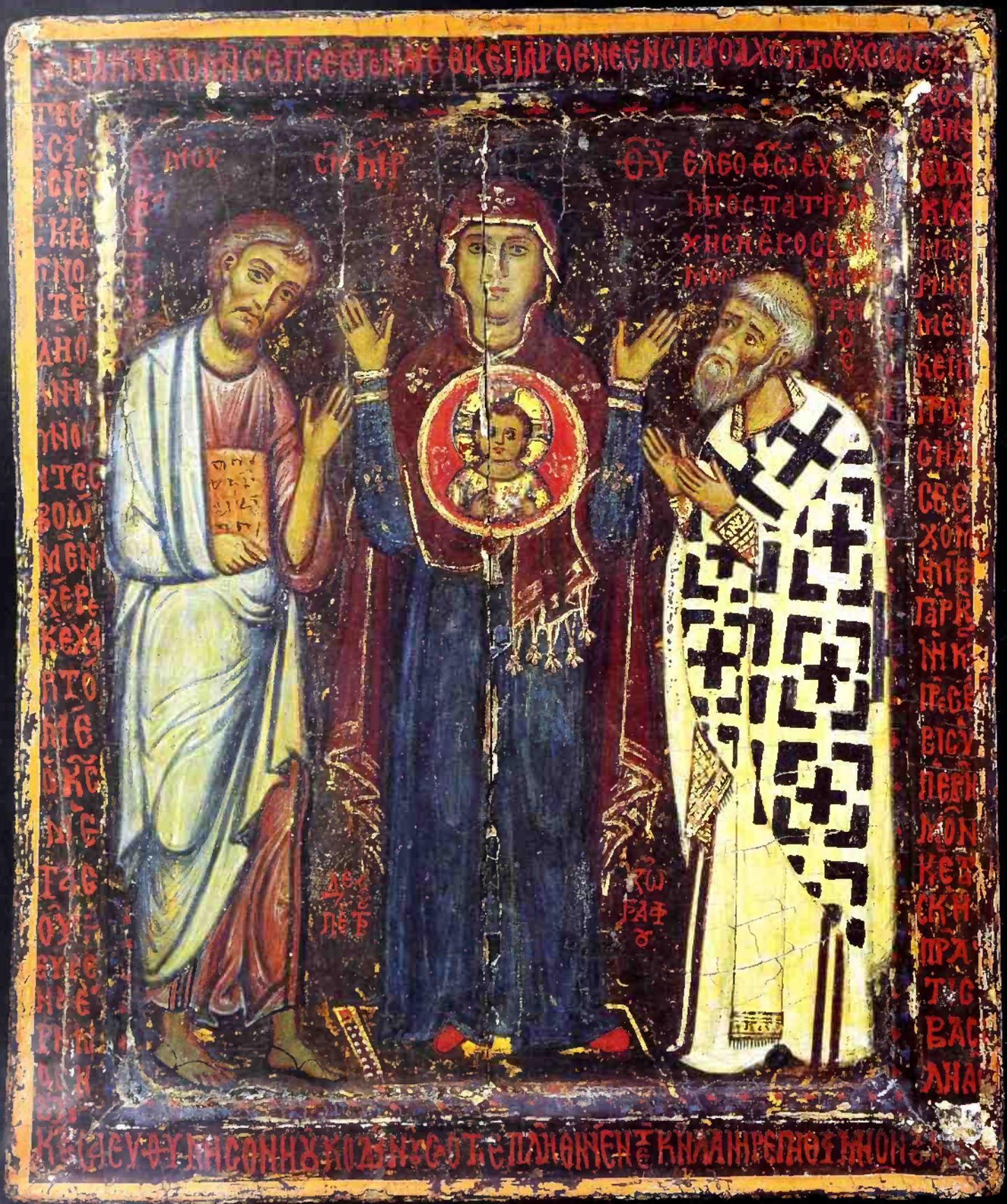
THIS ICON OF MOSES gesturing to a standing Virgin and Child belongs to a series of ten Sinai icons in which a saint or patriarch accompanies the Virgin Kyriotissa, an iconographic type in which the Virgin holds the child in front of her with both hands (fig. 132).[1] The version seen here is explicitly identified as the Virgin of the Burning Bush on a thirteenth-century Sinai icon with Sinaitic saints (fig. 82), painted by the artist of another icon herein (see cat. no. 53), and may refer to a now-lost icon in the Chapel of the Burning Bush.[2] The same Virgin and Child reappear surrounded by branches and joined by Saint Catherine on a thirteenth-century icon (cat. no. 56), and a seated variant is found on other small icons at the monastery.[3]

Weitzmann has suggested that the icons in this series were commissioned with the name saints of patrons as votive gifts or souvenirs,[4] while Mouriki thought they were made to be given to prestigious pilgrims.[5] Yet if they were gifts or souvenirs, why have none been found elsewhere, and why would the monastery have preserved these images for centuries? Instead, a local painter may have painted them as personal devotional icons for monks in the monastery—hence the repetition of the common names of George and Sabas. Eleventh-century sources document that monks had icons in their cells "for worship."[6] The venerating saint would have provided a model of devotion for the patron at the monastery, and the icons would have retained their significance for subsequent monks at Sinai.

KC, RSN

52, reverse

Figure 132
Isaiah and the Virgin, thirteenth century. Tempera on panel. The Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, Egypt.



53 Virgin with Moses and Patriarch Euthymios II of Jerusalem

The Painter Peter

ca. 1223, Palestine or Sinai

Tempera and metal leaf on textile over panel

45.4 × 37.5 × 1.9 cm (17⅞ × 14¾ × ¾ in.)

INSCRIBED

In badly misspelled Greek: Ο ΠΡ(ο)ΦΗΤΗΣ ΜΟΥΣΗΣ (The prophet Moses); ΜΗ(τη)Ρ Θ(εο)Υ (Mother of God); ΕΛΕΟ Θ(ε)Ω ΕΥΘΥΜΙΟΣ ΠΑΤΡΙΑΡΧΗΣ ΙΕΡΟΣΟΛΗΜΩΝ Ο ΜΑΚΑΡΙΟΣ (The blessed Euthymios, by the mercy of God patriarch of Jerusalem); Μακαρίζομέν σε πάσε ἑ γενεαί, Θ(εοτό)κε παρθένε· ἐν σὶ γὰρ ὁ ἀχώριτος Χ(ριστὸ)ς ὁ Θ(εὸ)ς ἡμ(ῶν) χωριθήνε εὐδόκισεν. Μακάριὴ ἐαμεν κὲ ἡμ(εῖς)· προστ[α]σίαν σε ἔχομ(εν). Ἡμέ(ρας) γὰρ κ(αὶ) νηκτ(ὸς) πρεσβεύις ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν, κὲ τὰ σκήπτρα τῆς βασιλήας τὲς σὲς εἰκεσίες κρατύνοντε. Ἀρὸ ἀνημνοῦντες βοῶμεν· Χέρε κεχαριτωμέ(νη), ὁ Κ(ύριο)ς μετὰ σοῦ (All we the generations call thee blessed, O Virgin Theotokos, for in thee He, the Uncontainable One, Christ our God, was pleased to be contained. Blessed are we also [who] have thee as protection, for day and night dost thou intercede for us, and the scepters of the kingdom are strengthened by thine entreaties. Wherefore, with hymns we cry to thee: Rejoice, O Full of Grace, the Lord is with thee);[1] Εὐ(φ)ράνου, ἔρημος ἡ οὐ τίκτουσα, εὐθύμησον, ἡ οὐκ ὠδείνουσα, ὅτι ἐπλήθυνεν τέκνα ἀνὴρ ἐπηθειμένων τῶν τοῦ [Πν(εύματο)ς] (Be glad, O barren one that has not given birth, be of good cheer, thou that hast not travailed; for a man of desires has multiplied [thy] children of the Spirit);[2] ΑΕ(ησις) ΠΕΤΡΟΥ ΖΩΓΡΑΦΟΥ (Prayer of Peter the painter)

CONDITION

Good condition. Chrysography and gilded halo for figure of Christ and costume details. Remnants of gilding in foreground and possibly Virgin's halo. Abrasion and losses throughout black background and engaged frame. Red text has been applied over losses to black ground, suggesting later application. Thick, uneven varnish layer.

The Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, Egypt

UNLIKE OTHER ICONS with diminutive donor portraits (e.g., cat. nos. 10, 11, 42), this one depicts Euthymios II of Jerusalem on the same scale as the adjacent holy figures, the Virgin and Moses.[3] Tonsured as was customary for Eastern Orthodox monks at the time, Euthymios wears a cross-patterned chasuble, or *polystavrion*, that signifies his patriarchal rank. He has no halo, and the word "blessed" before his name means he was already dead when the icon was painted. The patriarch's marble tombstone still stands in the northeast corner of the Sinai basilica and bears a Greek and Arabic epitaph dated Wednesday, December 13, 1223 (fig. 133).[4] The present icon must have been painted around that time and probably hung next to the tomb.[5]

The image of Moses holding the tablets of the Law (from EXOD. 31:18) refers to Sinai as Euthymios's place of burial. One of the short liturgical songs, or troparia, written on the frame honors Saint Euthymios the Great (d. 473), the deceased patriarch's patron saint. The second, a hymn to the Virgin, forms part

53, reverse

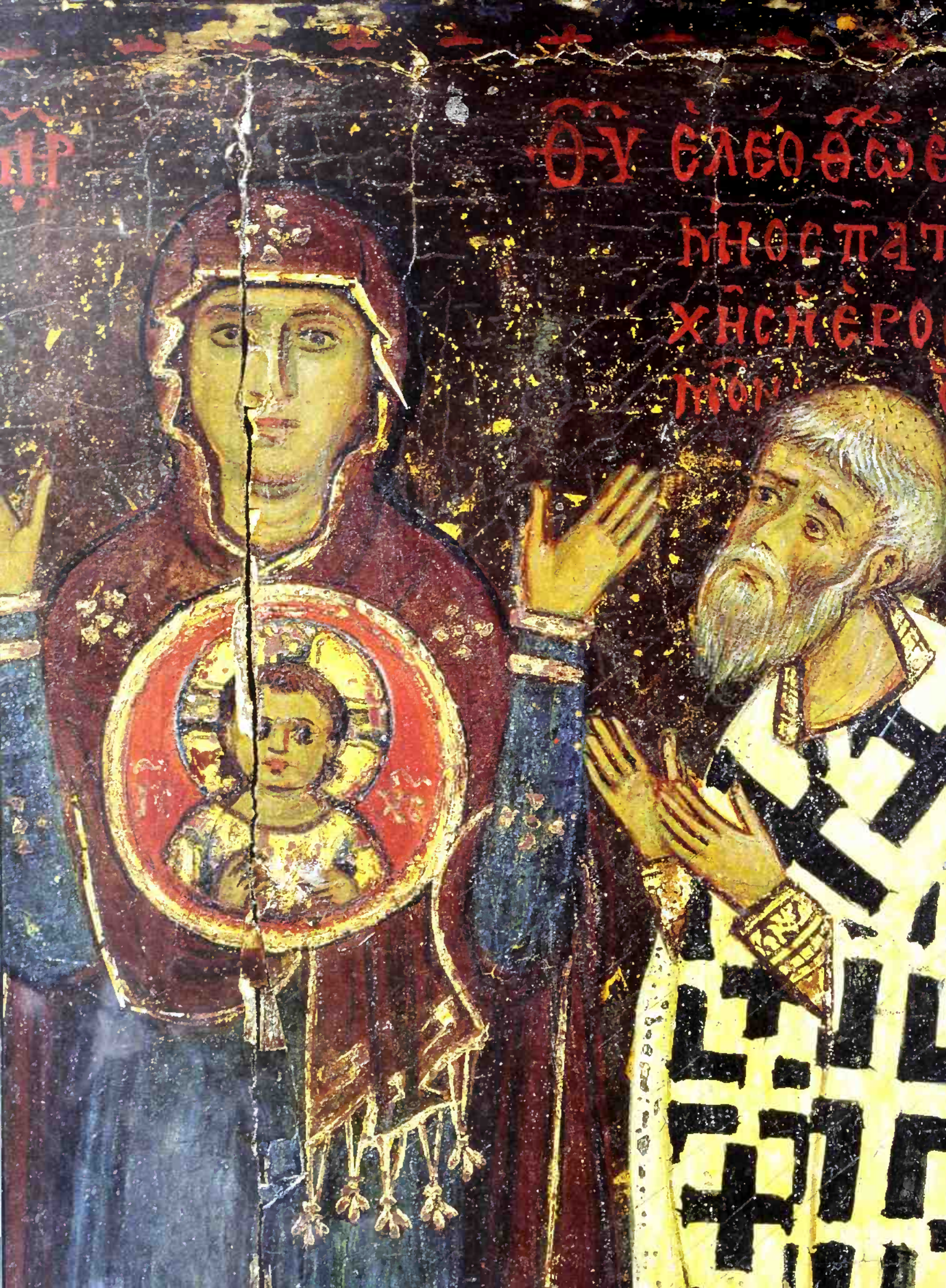


Figure 133
Tombstone of Euthymios, 1223. Inscription on marble. The Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, Egypt. Photo: Robert S. Nelson.

of the daily commemoration of the dead during the midnight church office of nocturns, or *mesonyktikon*,[6] where it precedes the prayer "Remember, O Lord, our fathers and brethren that have fallen asleep in hope of the resurrection of eternal life, and all that have ended their days in piety and faith."[7]

Datable with relative precision, the present work provides a reference point for the chronology of other Sinai icons. The image of Saint John Climacus (see cat. no. 47) is so close to it in manner of execution that it can be ascribed to the same painter. The artist signed his name here, which is unusual, in a short prayer below the edge of the Virgin's mantle. Similar inscriptions by him are found on three more Sinai panels.[8]

GRP

NOTES

1. *Great Horologion* 1997, p. 37; compare *Festal Menaion* 1977, p. 516.
2. *Great Horologion* 1997, p. 393.
3. On Euthymios II, see Pahlitzsch 2001, p. 258.
4. Tafrali 1913, pp. 78–80, no. 2; Rabino 1938, pp. 27, 103, nos. 33–34, 114; on the date, compare Grumel 1962, pp. 197–98.
5. On funerary portraits in Byzantine painting, see Papamastorakis 1996; Weissbrod 2003, pp. 79–171 (with bibliog.).
6. On the significance of this part of nocturns, see Simmons 1984, p. 26.
7. *Great Horologion* 1997, pp. 37–38.
8. Mouriki 1988.

REFERENCES

Amantos 1928, p. 47; G. Sotiriou and M. G. Sotiriou 1956–58, vol. 1, fig. 158, and vol. 2, pp. 138–39; Abrantis 1986, pp. 93–104, fig. 51; Mouriki 1988, pp. 329–31, 335–37, figs. 1–4, 16, 18; Mouriki 1990, pp. 112–13, 175, fig. 48, and p. 386 n. 60 (with bibliog.); Mouriki 1995, p. 122, no. 12; Lidov 1999, pp. 98–99, no. 29; Baltoyanni 2000, pp. 139–41.

53 (opposite), detail

639

54 Saints Nicholas, Sabas, Barbara, and Irene

Twelfth century, Sinai(?)

Tempera and gold on panel

49.7 × 37.5 × 2.5 cm (19⁹⁄₁₆ × 14¾ × 1 in.)

INSCRIBED
O A(γιος) NIKOΛΑΟC (Saint Nicholas); O A(γιος) CABAC (Saint Sabas); Η ΑΓΙΑ ΒΑΡΒΑΡΑ (Saint Barbara); Η ΑΓΙΑ ΙΡΗΝΗ (Saint Irene)

CONDITION
Entire background originally gilded, as seen in areas of loss around Saint Barbara's feet. Pink marbleized background in lower half of composition later addition. In lower register, large losses to each of the figures have been retouched.

The Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, Egypt

NOTES
1. See Yuri Piatnitsky in New York 1997a, pp. 122–23, no. 69.
2. Treadgold 1982, p. 237.
3. New York 1997a, pp. 60–62.
4. Kühnel 2001, pp. 353–62.
5. Dodd 2001, pp. 62–63.
6. G. Sotiriou and M. G. Sotiriou 1956–58, vol. 1, fig. 184.
7. Weitzmann 1966b, fig. 124, b.

REFERENCES
Unpublished.

54, reverse

THIS ICON OF FOUR SAINTS is deceptively simple. Two male saints, Nicholas and Sabas, at the left, balance two female saints, Barbara and Irene, at the right. The men make a gesture of speech or blessing and hold a book or scroll. Each woman grasps a martyr's cross in her right hand and makes a gesture of acknowledgment with her left. The men are accorded the more dominant gestures with the superior hand, and the women the more distinctive garments—Barbara's bright red tunic and Irene's gilded imperial *loros* and *thorakion*.

The four saints in a row recall menologia icons (see cat. no. 31), but the reason for their selection is less clear. Only three of these saints' feast days are contiguous (Barbara, Dec. 4; Sabas, Dec. 5; and Nicholas, Dec. 6); Irene's falls much later in the liturgical year (Aug. 9). Normally, when several saints appear on the same icon, they are of a common type; for example, military saints.[1]

The placement and cult of each of these four saints do, however, provide clues to their inclusion. The two outer saints are more universal, the inner saints more local. In Byzantine art, center trumps side, and stage left supercedes stage right. Thus, compositionally, the male half and Sabas rank higher than the female half and Barbara. At the sides are Nicholas, one of the most popular saints in the Byzantine Empire, and Irene, less common but an empress and supporter of icons during the Iconoclastic period.[2] Sabas and Barbara were important regionally. Sabas founded a major monastery in Palestine and served as a model for monks. His portrait appears at the center of other monastic saints on the back of an eleventh-century processional cross.[3] The Crusaders embraced Sabas's cult and portrayed him prominently in the redecorated church of the Nativity in Bethlehem.[4]

The cult of Saint Barbara is also associated with Syria and Palestine.[5] She joins Symeon Stylites, another saint from that region, on a thirteenth-century icon at Sinai.[6] Finally, Irene may have been important to Sinai. Dressed similarly to Catherine (cat. no. 55), she was paired with the monastery's new patron on the frame of a thirteenth-century icon of the Crucifixion (cat. no. 15).[7] In sum, Nicholas and Irene contribute their renown and status to the celebration of Sabas and Barbara.

RSN

ΑΓΙΑ
ΕΚΑΤΕΡΙΝΑ

55 Saint Catherine and Scenes from Her Life

Early thirteenth century, Sinai(?)

Tempera and metal leaf on panel

75.3 × 51.4 × 2.5 cm (29⅝ × 20¼ × 1 in.)

INSCRIBED

On center panel: left: Η ΑΓΙΑ (Saint), right: ΕΚΑΤΕΡΙΝΑ (Catherine); at top: η α(γία) προσευχομενη (The saint in prayer); η α(γία) . . . (The saint [illegible]); at right: η α(γία) διαλεγόμενη (The saint interrogated); προσπεσών(τες) ή ρητορες η(ς) τοὺς πόδας τ(ῆ)ς ἁγ(ίας) (The rhetors falling at the feet of the saint); η ρητορες εν τη καμ(ιν)ω (The rhetors in the furnace); at left: η αγ(ία) τύπτετε (The saint is struck); πρόσπεσων η δέσποινα τὴν α(γίαν) εν τη φυλακει (The empress falling before the saint in the prison); η α(γία) δηαλεγομένη μετὰ τοῦ ἐπαρ(χου) καὶ τοῦ βασιλεος (The saint interrogated by the eparch and the emperor); at bottom: η α(γία) εν το τροχω (The saint on the wheel) ; [ή] α(γία) και η δε[σποι]να δηαλεγόμεναι . . . β[ασιλ(έως)] (The saint and the empress interrogated [by the] emperor); η αγ(ίες) ξυφη τεληοῦνται (The saints are put to death by the sword)[1]

CONDITION

Scattered flake losses in gilded and painted surfaces. Majority of losses are along the vertical cracks through panel. Halos are painted. Very uneven, amber-colored varnish. Panel is warped in two parts, creating a washboard effect. Evidence of several structural restoration treatments on reverse of panel.

The Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, Egypt

SAINT CATHERINE IS AN UNUSUAL SUBJECT for Byzantine art. Scholars believe that this panel is the only extended cycle of her life to survive in any medium in Byzantium.[2] It is an interesting example of the possible artistic and social exchanges between the Byzantine East and the Latin West; indeed, Catherine's material and spiritual ties to the monastery named after her (the Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine at Sinai) probably developed as a response to the needs of Latin pilgrims, who traveled to Sinai with hopes of venerating her relics there. Although the sixth-century Justinianic foundation was dedicated to the Virgin, by the early thirteenth century, it was referred to as the Monastery of Saint Catherine by Latin pilgrims. The Greeks did not adopt this name until at least a century later.[3]

This icon displays a regal Catherine in the center of the panel. Her elaborate garb and high crown have been linked to Byzantine female imperial imagery.[4] Alternatively, she has also been said to resemble depictions of the Georgian queen Tamar.[5] That the figure of Catherine can plausibly allude to multiple cultural sources is symptomatic of the icon type, this particular icon, and the nature of the saint herself. The narrative icon format is believed to have accommodated a multicultural audience composed of Greeks, Latins, Georgians, even Muslims, and Catherine was a saint venerated by such diverse groups.[6] Interestingly, the icon eschews all reference to Catherine's relics that constituted an integral part of the monastery's popularity with pilgrims; also, unlike Italian examples, it does not especially concentrate on Catherine's learning and rhetorical skills.[7] Instead, the depiction of the saint's life elaborates on the varied tortures she underwent and her final death by sword. This might have been because, in the eleventh century, a major portion of her relics at Sinai were removed to France, thus initiating yet another phase in the afterlife of this saint.[8]

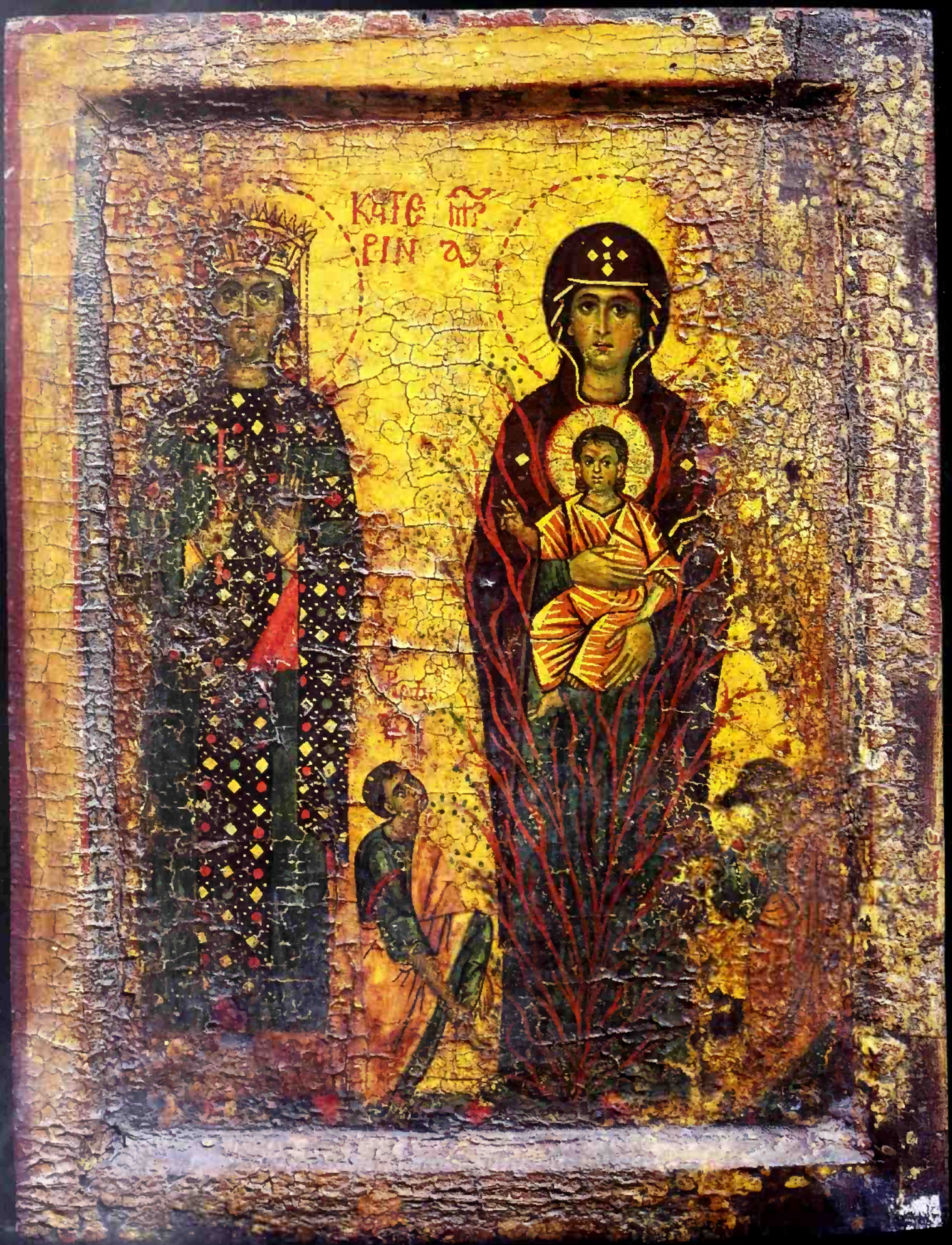
PC

NOTES

1. After Nancy P. Ševčenko in New York 2004, pp. 341.
2. Baltoyanni 1982–83.
3. A typikon for the monastery from the year 1214, written by Archbishop Symeon, is included in the manuscript Sinai gr. 1097; in this text, the monastery is still dedicated to the Virgin and not to Saint Catherine. See N. P. Ševčenko 1999, p. 163. See also her catalogue entry on the same icon in New York 2004, pp. 341–43, no. 201.
4. Mouriki 1990, pp. 114–15. See also G. Sotiriou and M. G. Sotiriou 1956–58, vol. 2, pp. 147–49.
5. Nancy P. Ševčenko in New York 2004, pp. 342–43.
6. For the multiculturalism of Byzantine narrative icons, see N. P. Ševčenko 1999. Ludolph of Suchem, who visited Sinai in the fourteenth century, recounts how the Saracens joined the Latins in kneeling before the relics of Saint Catherine: Stewart 1895, p. 86. See also the account of Felix Fabri: Hassler 1843–49, Stewart 1893–97.
7. The Byzantine icon is often compared with a thirteenth-century Pisan panel of the saint. See Krüger 1992, pp. 65–67; Belting 1994, pp. 377, 380; Peers 2004, pp. 82–83.
8. All Catherine's relics, except a skull and a hand, were transported to France, where they were peddled at Rouen by a Sinai monk known as Symeon the Five-Tongued. See Amantos 1953, pp. 29–31, 34.

REFERENCES

G. Sotiriou and M. G. Sotiriou 1956–58, vol. 1, fig. 166, and vol. 2, pp. 147–49; Mouriki 1990, pp. 114–15, 173, fig. 46; Nancy P. Ševčenko in New York 2004, pp. 341–43, no. 201.



56 Saint Catherine with the Virgin of the Burning Bush

Thirteenth century, Sinai

Tempera and metal leaf with pigmented varnish on panel

38.1 × 29 × 2.9 cm (15 × 11 7/16 × 1 1/8 in.)

INSCRIBED

Η Α(γία) ΚΑΤΕΡΙΝΑ (Saint Catherine); Μ(ήτη)Ρ [Θεοῦ] (Mother of God); ΠΡΟΦ(ήτης) ΜΩΥCΙC (Prophet Moses)

CONDITION

Decoration to Saint Catherine's *loros* is square-cut silver leaf. Christ's halo and details of costume also created with cut metal leaf. Catherine's and Virgin's halos are both incised and painted. Extensive cracking along right, left, and bottom edges of the image. Varnish and surface dirt have accumulated between raised areas. Front of engaged frame covered with an ochre-color paint.

The Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, Egypt

THIS ICON PROVIDES THE EARLIEST EXAMPLE in which the three great cult figures of the monastery are combined in one work. Saint Catherine, wearing the imperial *loros* and a crown with *pendilia*, stands beside the Virgin and Child, enveloped in the winding orange flames and green tendrils of the Burning Bush. Mary's pose bears a strong similarity to a series of thirteenth-century Sinai icons of the Virgin Kyriotissa with a saint or prophet.[1] The present panel documents the rising status of Catherine at the monastery; she is represented as visually equivalent to the Virgin and looks outward to accept the devotions of beholders. To the Virgin's right, a diminutive Moses removes his sandal. An inscription identifies the similarly costumed figure to her left, now obscured by the damage to the panel, as a second Moses, raising a hand either to receive the tablets of the Law or to shield his face while in the presence of God.[2]

The Virgin in flames appeared first in the twelfth century, concurrent with the Latin presence in the Holy Land. A late-twelfth-century icon now in the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate in Jerusalem combines an Annunciation scene with that of Moses before the Burning Bush (see fig. 88).[3] While in Byzantine exegesis, the Burning Bush was understood as a metaphor for the Virgin's purity, the only earlier Byzantine images to express this concept did so obliquely. In two manuscripts of the Homilies of the Monk James from the 1130s, Moses removes his sandals in front of a flaming bush containing a medallion portrait of Christ (see fig. 91).[4] Mary thus appears *as* rather than *in* the Burning Bush. All other twelfth- and thirteenth-century examples showing the Virgin enveloped in, or in proximity to, the flames of the bush can be associated with the Holy Land.[5]

While Catherine holds the cross of martyrdom and turns her left palm outward, as in Byzantine depictions, she wears an emperor's *loros*, not an empress's *thorakion*.[6] The relative size of the Moses figures presents one of the more curious elements of this composition; such a reduced scale would typically be reserved for a donor figure rather than a prophet and the primary figure with whom the site was associated. The oddities of Catherine's costume, the relative prominence of the saint in this composition, and most particularly, the appearance of this highly specific Burning Bush imagery are aspects of the individualized visual language developed at Sinai and suggest that the icon was painted there.[7]

KC

NOTES

1. See cat. no. 52, Moses and the Virgin Kyriotissa.
2. The two images of Moses before the Burning Bush and Moses receiving the Law are paired in the apse mosaics of the church, on the arms of the sixth-century Moses Cross, as well as in two early-thirteenth-century icons at the monastery (cat. no. 51 and fig. 131).
3. Huber 1980, pp. 184–88 and pl. 146. Moses appears twice before the Virgin, who is seated at the center of the flaming bush. An angel gestures to the Virgin, who holds a spindle and is shown with a bust medallion of the Christ child on her breast.
4. *The Homilies on the Life of the Virgin by the Monk James*, Vat. gr. 1162, fol. 54v, and Paris gr. 1208, fol. 73v. See Stornajolo 1910, p. 11, pl. 21; Omont 1927.
5. A twelfth-century fresco of the Virgin and Child in Tripoli showed the central figures flanked by angels and two flames—references to the burning bush—while on the frame of a thirteenth-century Crusader diptych at the monastery an orant Virgin can be seen entwined in the flaming bush. For the Tripoli fresco, Church of Mart Barbara, Barghoun (destroyed in 1997) see Dodd 2004, pl. 24, no. 7; for the diptych of Saint Procopius and the Virgin Kykkotissa, Mouriki 1990, p. 190, fig. 65.
6. A similar costume worn by Catherine in a thirteenth-century icon of Catherine and Marina at the monastery led Kurt Weitzmann to attribute this to the unfamiliarity of the Western artist with proper imperial attire. See Weitzmann 1966b, p. 73, fig. 50.
7. Weitzmann 1974, pp. 53–54, fig. 51.

REFERENCES

Weitzmann 1966b; Weitzmann 1974; Tzvetkova-Ivanova 2000; Drandaki 2004; N. P. Ševčenko 2006; and N. P. Ševčenko forthcoming.

56, reverse

57 Saint Catherine

Martinus of Villanova

1387, Barcelona or Majorca(?)

Tempera and gold over red bole on panel

127.3 × 56.5 × 4.1 cm (50⅛ × 22¼ × 1⅝ in.)

INSCRIBED

Lower left: S(ancta) CATERINA (Saint Catherine); bottom register: Aquest(a) retaula, sia fer.lo honrat, e(n) Be(r)nat M(ar)esa, ciutada de Barch (ino)na. Consol. De. Cathalans. En Domans en l'an M.CCC.LXXXVII (This retable, made for the honorable Bernardo of Maresa, citizen of Barcelona and consul of the Catalans in Damascus in the year 1387); on reverse: MARTIN(us) D(e) VILANOVA PINXIT (Martinus of Villanova painted it).

CONDITION

Extensive restoration in face and robe. Varnish slightly discolored, contributing to matte appearance of surface. Incised lines on gold were used to delineate contours of painted figure and wheel. Appears that artist adjusted contours of figure during painting process; reduction in the contours of the figure were covered with gold leaf. Punchwork (created with two round-shaped tools of different sizes) creates entire design of background; characterized by skips and dense dots. Crown decoration created by colored glazes and punchwork over gold. Frame added later.

The Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, Egypt

NOTES

1. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek Clm 4554; Delehaye 1902, pp. 123–24. The tenth-century Sacramentary of Mont-Saint-Michel also lists the missa de Sancta Katerina. Bibliothèque Municipale Rouen, Ms. sup 116.
2. Duelt (2004, p. 365) cites early-fifteenth-century visits to Catalonia, made by Sinai monks seeking economic support from the kings of Aragon.
3. See, for example, the fourteenth-century panel of Saints Catherine and Bartholomew attributed to Allegretto Nuzi; Davies 1988, pp. 1–2, pl. 1.
4. The skin tones do not appear to have been created with the Italian verdaccio technique, using a green underlayer, but instead the greenish tint has been created using this pigment throughout. I thank Tiarna Doherty for her careful observations of this work during study trips undertaken for this exhibition.
5. Duelt 2004, pp. 366–69. At top right, the coat of arms is not clear. Divided by a cross, the second and third quarters bear the royal bars, while traces of blue pigment in the first and fourth quarters of the shield suggest that they may have borne the coat of arms of the city of Majorca

REFERENCES

Pijoan 1907; Soler i Palet 1912; Cuoyat-Barthoux 1913–14; Manafis 1990, p. 200, fig. 73; Mouriki 1990, pp. 121–23; Duelt 2004.

THIS ALTAR PANEL SHOWS A GRACEFULLY POSED CATHERINE in the International Gothic style. She holds the palm of martyrdom in her right hand while resting her left hand on the wheel at her side. Western devotion to the saint can be documented as early as the ninth century with her inclusion in an index of saints' *passio* in a manuscript in Munich, while her cult grew in Normandy perhaps as early as the eleventh century in response to the relics said to have been brought to the monastery of the Blessed Trinity during the rule of Abbot Isambert.[1] Despite the execution of this work in Italianate style and the prominence of the characteristic Western iconographic element of the spiked wheel, this panel provides a rare example of a Western work whose commission was intimately tied to the holy site of Sinai, rather than the broader cult of Catherine in the West.

The Catalan consul to Damascus, Bernardo Maresa, commissioned this work in 1387, in the period just preceding that in which Barcelona came to rival Venice as a primary point of departure for travelers to the Holy Land. In the kingdom of Aragon, particularly in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the large number of church and altar dedications to Catherine testify to the importance of her cult, while the kings of Aragon demonstrated their support for the monastery more concretely through regular donations.[2] This work stands as a testament, therefore, not merely to the particular devotion to Catherine in fourteenth-century Catalonia but to the reverence this monastery inspired among the faithful of the Latin West.

No evidence remains of the painter, Martinus de Vilanova; his name was not mentioned in any workshops as either apprentice or assistant. The Italian influence on this work can be seen in Catherine's robe of luxurious blue brocade,[3] modeled after Persian silks, and the green cast to Catherine's skin tones.[4] The artist's name suggests that he was a Catalan or Majorcan artist trained in the Sienese style. Daniel Duelt has suggested that the coat of arms indicates a Majorcan provenance.[5] The limited tools used to create the somewhat haphazard punch work also support the idea that this work, though delicately modeled, was not a product of one of the sophisticated ateliers of the capital.

KC

57, detail

ΘΕΟΣΙΤΟΥΣ ΙΩΑΝΝΗΣ ΟΣ
ΑΕΧΟΜΕΝΟΣ ΤΟΝ ΝΟΜΟΝ ΥΠΟ ΧΕΙΡΑ ΧΥ
ΟΣΙΟΜΑΡΤΥΣ ΑΡΣΕΝΙΟΣ
ΟΣΙΟΜΑΡΤΥΣ ΑΝΤΩΝΙΟΣ
ΑΓΙΑ ΑΙΚΑΤΕΡΙΝΑ
ΚΥΑΣΟΜΕΝΗΝ ΥΠΟ ΑΓΓΕΛΩΝ

58 Triptych with Virgin of the Burning Bush and the Burial of Saint Catherine

Sixteenth century(?), Crete(?)

Tempera and gold on panel

Closed: 63.1 × 41.3 × 8.6 cm
(24 13/16 × 16 1/4 × 3 3/8 in.)

INSCRIBED
Interior: center panel, top left: ΟΡΑCΙC ΤΟΥ ΠΡΟΦΗΤΟΥ ΜΩΥCΕΩC (Vision of the prophet Moses); top right: ΔΕΧΟΜΕΝΟC ΤΟΝ ΝΟΜΟΝ ΥΠΟ ΧΕΙΡΟC Κ(ύριο)Υ (Receiving the Law from the hand of the Lord); bottom: Η ΑΓΙΑ ΑΙΚΑΤΕΡΙΝΑ ΚΥΔΕΥΟΜΕΝΗ ΥΠΟ Τ(ῶν) ΑΓΓΕΛ[ων] (Saint Catherine interred by angels); left panel, top: Ο Α(γι)ος Ιω(άννης) Ο ΠΡΟΔΡΟΜΟC (Saint John the Forerunner [the Baptist]); on scroll: ΜΕΤΑΝΟΕΙΤΕ ΗΓΓΙΚΕΝ [γάρ] Η ΒΑCΙΛΕΙΑ ΤΩΝ ΟΥΡΑΝΩΝ (Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand [MATT. 3:2]); bottom: Ο Α(γι)ος ΙΑΚΩΒΟC (Saint James); right panel, top: Ο ΑΓΙΟC ΑΝΔΡΕΑC (Saint Andrew); bottom: Ο Α(γι)ος ΑΝΤΩΝΙΟC (Saint Anthony); on scroll: ΙΔΟΝ ΕΓΩ ΤΑC ΠΑΓΙΔΑC ΤΟΥ Δι(α)ΒΟΛΟΥ ΓΠΛΩΜΕΝΑC ΕΝ ΤΗ ΓΗ (I saw the traps of the devil spread out over the earth).
Exterior: left panel, top: S. CATERINA (Saint Catherine); bottom: S. MARTINUS (Saint Martin); right panel, top: S. MOYSES (Saint Moses); bottom: S. ANDREAS APL'S (Saint Andrew the apostle)

CONDITION
Excellent condition. Varnish on panels is slightly uneven overall. Incised halos. Carved and painted (over gilding) wooden strips applied over engaged frame of central panel. Exterior sides of triptych box have mortise-and-tenon joins; design motifs incised, carved, and punched. Front cover of box, in foreground, has dark blue/black paint, while borders are stained with a mauve-colored paint.

The Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, Egypt

EVENTS FROM TWO MOMENTS in the sacred history of Mount Sinai are the focus of the central panel of this triptych. In the upper half of the panel, the biblical narrative of Moses receiving the Law of God is depicted in three sequential scenes, all set within a unified rocky landscape. At the left, Moses is halted by the miraculous appearance of the Burning Bush. Within its flames, the Virgin and Child appear in a mandorla of heavenly light (Θεοτόκος ἡ Βάτος), a sign that this Old Testament miracle prefigures the incarnate Christ. In the center, a kneeling Moses obeys the command to remove his sandals. At the far right, he receives the Law tablets from the hand of God. Though painted—for the most part—in a late Byzantine style, this icon depicts the triad of mountains framing the figures of Moses in the manner of post-Byzantine representations of Mount Sinai. Though the icon is not dated, stylistically it compares to other works produced in the sixteenth century.

The transfer of Saint Catherine's relics to the holy site of Mount Sinai is the subject of the bottom scene of this central panel. Two archangels lower the

58, detail

58, exterior with doors closed

body of the saint—clad in crown and imperial robes, her corpse uncorrupted—onto a funerary slab set within this same, three-peaked mountainous landscape. This scene, together with those of Moses above, are frequently found in *loca sanctus* images made for pilgrims to the Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine at Sinai.[1]

Such imagery suggests that the triptych was made at the Sinai monastery, perhaps as a votive offering from a private donor.[2] The four standing saints on the side wings, especially Saint James on the left panel, may also have had special meaning for this site, for the icon is now kept in the chapel dedicated to Saint James.[3] When the triptych is closed, the exterior panels show incised decoration of a different, and likely later, workshop;[4] these carved images include a standing portrait of Saint Catherine and a repeated scene of Moses receiving the Law.

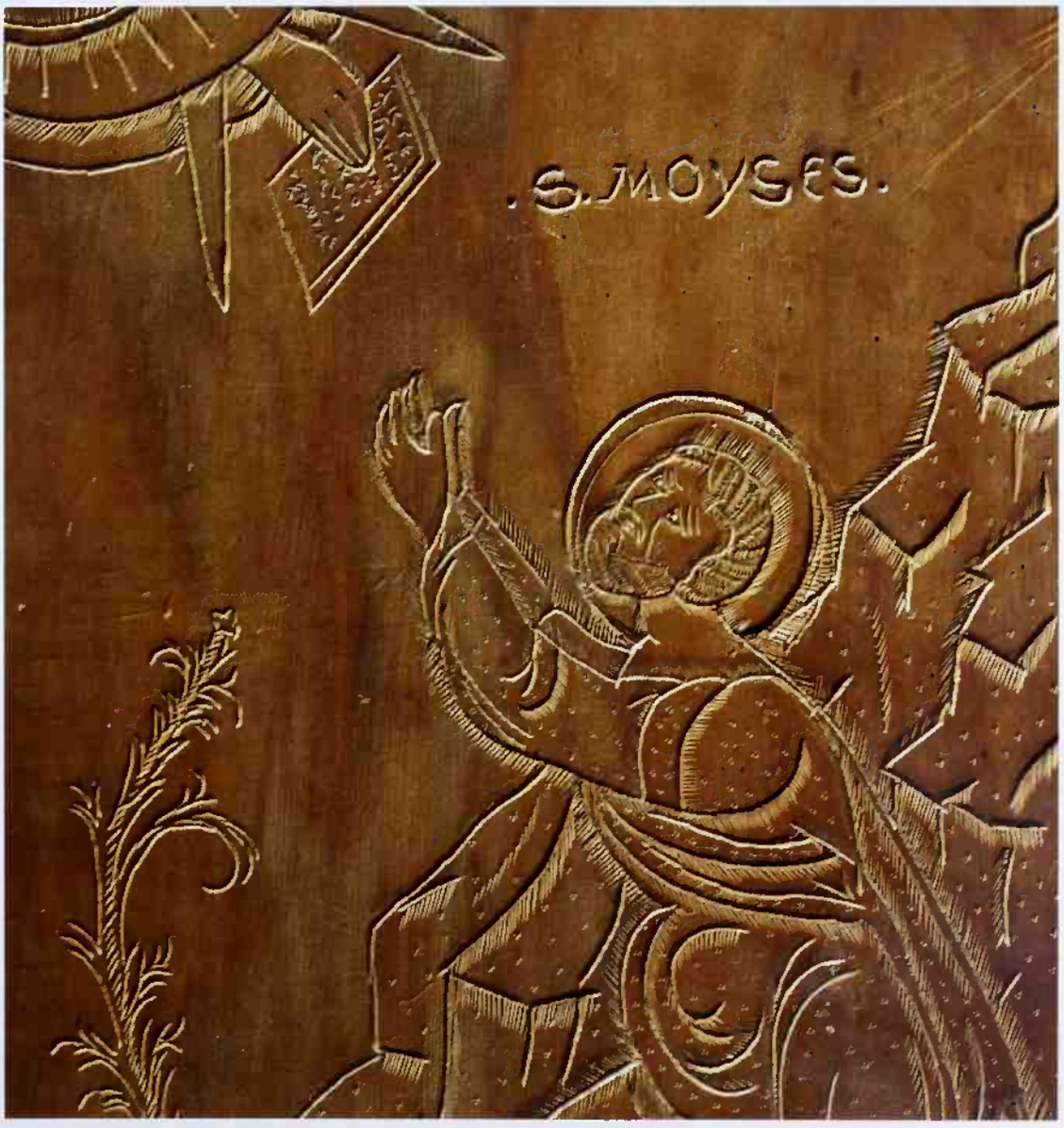
AV

NOTES

1. Weitzmann 1974, pp. 53–55, figs. 54–55.
2. Portable icons were frequently commissioned as private devotional offerings to a sanctuary or holy site: Weitzmann 1974, pp. 53–54.
3. As seen in the photograph published in Forsyth and Weitzmann 1965, pl. 98, fig. A.
4. In contrast to the interior panel paintings, the exterior incised drawings feature inscriptions in Latin script. We can only speculate as to whether the exterior decorations were added later at the request of a Latin donor.

REFERENCE

George Galavaris in *Hiera Monē Sina* 2001, entry for November



58 (left), detail of side showing symbols of the Passion

58 (above), detail of exterior panel with Moses receiving the Law

ΟΡΑΣΙΣ ΒΑΤΟΥ
ΜΩΥΣΕΩΣ
ΒΑΤΟ
ΠΟΙΗΣΑ ΜΙΧΑΗΛ ΤΑΔΕ
ΜΑΣΚΗΤΟΣ

59 The Virgin of the Burning Bush

Michael Damaskenos

Last quarter of the sixteenth century, Crete or Venice

Tempera and gold on panel

111 × 89 × 2.9 cm (43⅝ × 35 × 1⅛ in.)

INSCRIBED

Main inscription, left and right: ΟΡΑCΙC ΤΟΥ ΠΡΟΦΗΤΟΥ ΜΩΥCΕΟC Η ΑΓΙΑ ΒΑΤΟC (Vision of the prophet Moses the Holy Vatos [Virgin of the Burning Bush]); far left: ΤΟ ΟΡΟC ΤΟΥ ΠΡΟΦΗΤΟΥ ΜΩΗCΕΟC (The mountain of the prophet Moses); center left: ΕΚ ΠΕΤΡΑC ΓΛΟΡ ΕΠΟΤΙCΕΝ . . . (Water from the rock quenched [the people] . . .); above head of Virgin: Μ(ήτη)Ρ Θ(εο)Υ (Mother of God); center right: ΚΑΙ ΕΠΟΙΗCΑΝ ΜΟCΧΟΝ ΕΝ ΧΩΝ(ε)Β [τον] (And they fashioned a calf in cast metal); far right: ΤΟ ΟΡΟC ΤΗC Α(γί)ΑC ΑΙΚΑΤΕΡΙΝΗC (The mountain of Saint Catherine); bottom left-hand corner: ΠΟΙΗΜΑ ΜΙΧΑΗΛ ΤΟΥ ΔΑΜΑCΚΗΝΟΥ (Made by Michael Damaskenos); flanking head of John of Damascus: Ο ΑΓΙΟC Ιω(άννης) Ο ΔΑΜΑCΚΗΝΟC (Saint John of Damascus); on scroll: ΓΑΡ ΠΑΘΕΝ Η CΚΙΑ ΤΟΥ ΝΟΜΟΥ ΤΗC ΧΑΡΙΤΟC ΕΛΘΟΥCΗC ΩC ΓΑΡ Η ΒΑΤΟC ΟΥΚ ΕΚΑΙΕ ΤΟ ΚΑΤΑΦΛΕΓΟΜΕΝΗ ΟΥΤΩ ΠΑΡΘΕΝΟC ΕΤΕΚΕC Κ(αὶ) ΠΑΡΘΕΝΟC ΕΜΕΙΝΑC (For the shadow of the Law, having come from grace, came forth. Just as the Burning Bush was not consumed by fire, so too you, Virgin, gave birth, and a Virgin you remained.)

CONDITION

Good condition overall. Abrasion to gold in halos and background reveals red bole beneath. Halos have been incised with a double line. Details including chrysography in Christ's robe and angels in cloud around God the Father created with gold paint. Landscape details and figures incised into gold ground and then painted. Cleaning strip on lower left edge reveals darkened varnish layer prior to 1991 cleaning; a new coat of varnish was applied at this time. Several vertical cracks run through the right side, while scattered surface areas throughout show evidence of consolidation.

Collection of Saint Catherine of Sinai, Irákhion, Crete

THIS PORTABLE ICON, signed by the prominent Cretan painter Michael Damaskenos,[1] depicts Moses' encounters with the divine on Mount Sinai. On the left Moses stands before the Burning Bush, out of whose flames an angel appears, and below he removes his sandals. At the center of the icon, the Virgin holding the Christ child is enthroned within the Burning Bush (Θεοτόκος ἡ Βάτος). Her presence derives from the commentaries of the Byzantine theologian John of Damascus, who compared the bush unconsumed by fire to the Mother of God.[2] In the lower right-hand corner of the panel, the theologian himself gazes on the vision described on his scroll. Above are the scenes of the golden calf and of angels bringing Saint Catherine's body to the Jebel Katrina, one of the three peaks at Sinai.

The Virgin and Child and Moses before the Burning Bush follow Byzantine religious iconography.[3] In contrast, the scene of Moses receiving the Law includes the Western figure of God the Father, whose representation was avoided in earlier Byzantine art.[4] Such skillful combination of Byzantine and Renaissance forms characterizes post-Byzantine Cretan painting.

This icon belongs to the Collection of Saint Catherine of Sinai in Crete, which was once a *metochéion*, or dependency, of the main monastery in Egypt.[5] It probably served as a *locus sanctus* image and was based on contemporary prints.[6] Painted icons and, later, lithographs of this type were produced as votive objects and souvenirs for pilgrims to the holy site.[7]

AV

NOTES

1. The bibliography on Michael Damaskenos is extensive. Sources include M. Chatzidakis 1950; M. Chatzidakis 1985, pp. 101–2; Xyngopoulos 1957, pp. 136–59.
2. Kotter 1975, pp. 119–20. See also Kotter 1988, p. 492.
3. This figural grouping is comparable to another icon by Damaskenos, of the Virgin Brephokratousa in Corfu. See Vokotopoulos 1983, p. 43 n. 46, pl. 2, fig. 1, M. Chatzidakis 1987, p. 245, no. 72, fig. 122.
4. This contrast was noted by Sergio Bettini, who dated the icon to Damaskenos's stay in Venice (1574–79), when the artist decorated the church of San Giorgio dei Greci; Bettini 1934–35, pp. 356–57. Andreas Xyngopoulos similarly found an "Italian" influence in Damaskenos's figure of God the Father, which he compared to Michelangelo's Creator in the Sistine Chapel; Xyngopoulos 1957, p. 150. Nevertheless, he dated the icon to after Damaskenos's return to Crete in 1584, Xyngopoulos 1957, pp. 153–54.
5. The icon had previously belonged to the nearby Vrondisi Monastery in Crete. Around the year 1800, it was given to the *metochéion*, along with four other icons by Michael Damaskenos; Doulgerakis 1958, p. 169.
6. Teuffel 1995, p. 165.
7. Weitzmann 1974, pp. 53–55, figs. 54–55.

REFERENCES

Bettini 1934–35, pp. 356–57, fig. 1; Xyngopoulos 1957, pp. 147, 149–54, pl. 41, fig. 1, Doulgerakis 1958, p. 169; Kretdl-Papadopoulos 1970, p. 100, fig. 78; Lydakis 1976; M. Chatzidakis 1987, p. 245, no. 52.

60 Saint Catherine and Scenes from Her Life

Donato and Gregorio d'Arezzo, Italian (Aretine), act. 1315–ca. 1340

Previous attribution: Master of Saint Cecilia, Italian, act. 1290–1320, or follower

ca. 1330, Italy (Arezzo)

Tempera and gold leaf on panel

Unframed: 100 × 170.2 cm (39⅜ × 67 in.); framed: 113.3 × 180.7 × 10.2 cm (44⅝ × 71⅛ × 4 in.)

CONDITION

Fair condition. Early in the twentieth century the painting was transferred from its original wooden support to a new one, resulting in numerous small losses in the egg-tempera paint layers. Strong cleanings abraded the flesh tones and the gilded background. Saint Catherine's blue drapery and red cloak are largely intact, however, as are other areas throughout the painting, including the areas of original gold, with incised decoration.

The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles (73.PB.69)

THIS LARGE DOSSAL, which would have been placed on the altar in Italian churches, depicts Saint Catherine of Alexandria. Dressed as a Western noblewoman, she holds the palm of her martyrdom and a book symbolizing her knowledge.

The dossal derives its form from painted panels, or antependia, that decorated the fronts of altars. After the Lateran Council of 1215 the priest celebrated the Eucharist with his back to the congregation. As a result, during the thirteenth century, painted antependia were moved to the top of the altar, forming a backdrop for and a delineation of the altar space.[1] Although early altar panels absorbed formal elements from Byzantine templon beams,[2] the principal function of the altar panels was to identify the saint to whom the altar was dedicated.[3]

Several of the subsidiary scenes that appear to the left and right of the central figure refer to the version of the life and martyrdom of Saint Catherine popularized in Germany and Italy in the late-thirteenth and fourteenth century.[4] This version of Catherine's story includes an account wholly absent in Byzantine versions—the mystic marriage of Saint Catherine, who refused to marry a man who could not equal her in nobility, wisdom, and wealth. A hermit gave Catherine a small panel painting of the Virgin and Child with the instruction to pray to the Virgin to reveal her bridegroom. Through her prayer before this image and her appeal to the intermediary figure of the Virgin, Catherine was able to achieve her mystic union with Christ. This work thus reflects the primacy of images of the Virgin and Child in Italian art and devotion of the Middle Ages.

Unlike the Byzantine vita icon of Saint Catherine herein (see cat. no. 55), the final scene of Catherine's beheading shows angels laying her body to rest on a mountaintop. This element was included in a mid-thirteenth-century panel painting from Pisa and a slightly later dossal by the artist Margarito d'Arezzo (Italian, ca. 1216–ca. 1290).[5]

KC

60, detail

NOTES

1. Van Os 1984, pp. 12–13.
2. Weitzmann 1984, pp. 159–60, fig. 23. Weitzmann gives as one example the thirteenth-century dossal in the Museo Nationale in Pisa, in which the Virgin, Christ, and John the Baptist—the figures traditionally located at the center of Byzantine templon beams—are flanked by Saints Catherine and Silvester.
3. Gardner 1994, pp. 10–11.
4. Schmidt 2001. Schmidt writes that the earliest version of this story comes from the Cistercian monastery of Kaisheim near Donauwoerth but suggests that it must have circulated earlier in Italy as well as in Germany (p. 22 n. 8). For a translation of this manuscript, Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, cod. 7954, fol. 313v–316v, see Varnhagen 1891, pp. 18–23.
5. The panel, now in the Museo Nationale in Pisa, has been discussed in comparison to the vita icon by Weitzmann 1984, pp. 154–55, and Ševčenko, p. 153. The dossal, in the National Gallery in London, shows the Virgin and Child Enthroned, flanked by scenes of the Nativity and the lives of saints. M. Davies 1988, pp. 67–68, pl. 51.

REFERENCES

Boskovits and Gregori 1984, pp. 20–21, n. 41 (for published documentation of reattribution); Van Os 1984; Fehm Jr. 1986, p. 40; Offner 1986, pp. 9–10, 24, 28, 202–209, pls. 18, 18(5); M. Davies 1988, pp. 67–68, plate 51; Gardner 1994; and Schmidt 2001, p. 26, fig. 1.

61 Triptych with Scenes of the Old and New Testaments

El Greco (Greek, 1541–1614)

1569/70, Venice

Tempera on panel

Closed: 37 × 23.8 cm (14⅝ × 9⅜ in.); open: 37 × 60 cm (14⅝ × 23⅝ in.) and 37 × 51.5 cm (14⅝ × 20¼ in.)

INSCRIBED

Center back panel, across the top of the scene: ΤΟ ΑΓΙΟΝ ΚΑΙ ΘΕΟΒΑΛΙCΤΟΝ ΟΡΟC ΤΟ CINEON (The holy and God-trodden Mount Sinai); on the hill to the right of the monastery of Saint Catherine: ΧΕΙΡ ΔΟΜΗΝΙΚΟΥ (By the hand of Domenikos)

CONDITION

The front is pristine. On the back, paint loss to the Adam and Eve panel has exposed yellow areas in several places. The crack across the lower edge of the central scene of Mount Sinai is intentional, constituting the division between the independent central panel and the frame.

Galleria Estense, Modena, Italy

THIS SMALL TRIPTYCH FOR PERSONAL DEVOTION incorporates a scene of Moses at Mount Sinai into a visually and theologically sophisticated design. When the triptych is closed, the six panels reduce to two scenes of the Old Law—on the back, God giving Moses the Law on the mountaintop, and on the front, God speaking to Adam and Eve after Eve was created from Adam's side. Opening the first of the two wings reveals the grace of the New Dispensation: Mary as the new Eve in the Annunciation in the center and the Adoration of Shepherds at the left. Turning aside the inner wing exposes the narrative continuation, the Baptism on the right, and in the center a Counter-Reformation image of a triumphant Christ crowning a Christian knight, a bishop with a tall miter celebrating mass, and devils forcing the damned into a hell mouth (detail, below).[1]

Recent scholarship has resolved the once-contested attribution to El Greco (Domenikos Theotokopoulos, 1541–1614).[2] Still unresolved, however, is whether El Greco painted the triptych in Crete, or, more likely, after his immigration to Venice in 1567/68 under the strong impact of Venetian engravings. The triptych combines the coloration and dramatic settings of Venetian masters with the iconography of European prints. The central scene on the obverse, for example, adds details of the Last Judgment to a Counter-Reformation subject.[3] On the opposite side (see next page), the view of Mount Sinai derives from an engraving of Giovanni Battista Fontana that was printed in Venice in 1569 and suggests that El Greco painted the triptych there before moving to Rome in 1570.[4] Yet the gilded wooden frame resembles those of other Cretan icons of the period (see cat. no. 59) and points to the transitional character of the triptych.

61 (below), detail of central panel

61 (above), reverse

61 (opposite), detail of central panel, reverse, showing Saint Catherine's monastery at the base of Mount Sinai

El Greco painted the Sinai again in a somewhat larger and slightly later panel in Iráklion that can be traced back to the collection of Fulvio Orsini, the humanist adviser to Cardinal Alessandro Farnese in Rome (fig. 126). In both views, pilgrims approach the Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine at Sinai, nestled at the base of two mountains, but the Iráklion version lacks the narrative details of this earlier panel and constitutes an independent landscape, yet another genre of Western painting that El Greco absorbed.[5] The imaginative narrative of this earlier view foreshadows the expressionistic narratives of his later Spanish period.

In this triptych, the clouds part at the top of Mount Sinai and God descends in a flash of yellow to give Moses two white tablets, as the divine energy strikes the dramatically darkened mountain. Unlike in the later topographical view of the Sinai precincts (cat. no. 43), the early Byzantine stairs (see fig. 8) do not continue up the length of the mountain and thus render Moses' presence at the summit yet more miraculous. A shaft of light illumines the site of the Burning Bush, and angels deposit the body of Saint Catherine of Alexandria on the mountain at the right—details absent from the Iráklion version but common to the tradition represented by the later Sinai view (see cat. no. 43). El Greco's version visualizes the site for those—like the painter himself—who never made the pilgrimage he depicts. In the process a living sacred place becomes a beautiful, but dead, landscape.[6]

RSN

NOTES

1. Miesel 1953; D. Davies 2003, pp. 45–46.
2. See the excellent analysis of the scholarly literature by Maria Vassilaki in Iráklion 1990, pp. 156–59, 337–39.
3. A. G. Xydis 1995, pp. 142–43.
4. Constantoudaki 1975; Bray and Oliver 2003, pp. 32–33.
5. Teuffel 1995.
6. On these later illustrations, see Kühnel 1981.

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Maria Vassilaki in Iráklion 1990, pp. 156–85, 337–49; Vassilaki 1995.

Glossary

Akathistos Hymn (from Gr. *akathistos*, "not seated"): sermon in verse sung in honor of the Mother of God while the congregation stands

Akra Tapeinosis (Gr., "utmost humiliation"): representation of the dead Christ on the cross, known in the West as the Imago Pietatis, or Man of Sorrows

acheiropoietos (Gr., "not made by hand"): an image of miraculous origin and/or possessing miraculous properties

ambon: platform in the nave of a church from which, in early Christian times, lections were read and the liturgy was opened and closed

Amnos (Gr., "lamb"): epithet for Christ, referring to his aspect as sacrificial lamb; also denotes the central portion of the consecrated bread, which becomes Christ's body during the liturgy

analabos: part of a monastic habit, a sleeveless vest

analogion: lectern or stand on which books in the early Christian period were placed

Anastasis (Gr., "resurrection"): depiction of Christ bursting open the gates of Hades and releasing figures from the Old Testament; Easter image of the Orthodox Church; one of the twelve Great Feasts

argyrokentema (Gr., "silver embroidery"): silk thread with thin strips of silver loosely wound around it. *See also* chrysokentema

Ascension: feast of Christ's ascent into heaven; represented in art with Christ in a *mandorla*, surrounded by angels, rising over the twelve apostles with Mary at their center

augusta: title reserved for the Byzantine empress

augustos: one of the titles for the Byzantine emperor

autocephalus (from Gr. *auto*, "self," and *kephale*, "head"): referring to an ecclesiastical province with a right to nominate its own bishop

autokrator (Gr., "absolute ruler"): one of the titles for the Byzantine emperor, used with other imperial titles, such as *basileus* and *augustos*

basileus (Gr., "king"): principal title for the Byzantine emperor

bema (Gr., "raised step"): sanctuary in the eastern part of the church, containing the altar and accessible only to the clergy

Canon Tables: system of concordance to the Gospels, devised by Eusebios of Cesarea in the fourth century

cathedra: bishop's throne in the center of the apse

chiton (Gr., "tunic"): wool, linen, or cotton tunic; basic garment of most citizens of the Byzantine empire

chlamys (Gr., "mantle"), *pl.* **chlamydes:** long cloak fastened at the right shoulder; originally part of military costume, later an element of courtly attire

choros: polygonal structure suspended from a dome, carrying *polykandela*, or lamps and candles; introduced in the twelfth century

chrysokentema (Gr., "gold embroidery"): silk thread with thin strips of gold foil loosely wound around it. *See also* argyrokentema

ciborium: domed or pyramidal structure erected on columns over saints' tombs or over an altar (symbolizing the tomb of Christ)

codex: ancient manuscript text in book form; modern book form

coenobitic (from Gr. *koinobion*, "common life"): referring to monasteries in which monks or nuns follow a communal way of life; *coenobitic* monks and nuns adhere to the same schedule, eat together, own communal property and answer to the *hegoumenos*

Coptic: referring to Copts, Egypt's Orthodox Christian population; final stage of ancient Egyptian language, now used only as the liturgical language of the Coptic Church

Deesis (Gr., "entreaty"): representation of Christ between the Virgin Mary and Saint John the Baptist, who interact with Christ on the viewer's behalf

dekanos: secondary Roman officer; later a title often used to denote an imperial messenger, but applied to a variety of other positions

despot (Gr., "lord," "master"): honorary court title of the Byzantine Empire; introduced in the twelfth century to refer to officials second in rank only to the emperor

despotic icon: one of the large icons located in the lower portion of an *iconostasis*, or icon screen, on either side of the royal doors

diakonikon: sacristy room where sacred vessels are kept, usually to the right of the bema in a Byzantine church; also known as *skeuophylakion*

diakonos: deacon

diskokalymma: protective veil placed over the liturgical paten with the sacrament

Docetism: view that Jesus was a divine being who only appeared to be human, explicitly branded as a heresy by Ignatius

dodekaorton: liturgical cycle of the twelve Great Feasts of the Orthodox Church

ekphrasis (Gr., "description"): formal description used to visually evoke the described object or event
enkolpion (Gr., "on the bosom"): object worn around the neck, containing Christian imagery, a sacred relic, or inscription
epimanikia: embroidered cuffs worn over the sleeves of some priestly garments
epistyle: beam of a Byzantine templon
epitaphios: large liturgical cloth symbolically interpreted as the bier of Christ, often embroidered with an image of the dead Christ
epitrachelion: stole worn by a priest during the liturgy
Eucharist: a sacrament and the central act of worship in many Christian churches; the bread and wine that are mystically transformed into the body and blood of Christ on the altar

gammata: ornaments shaped like the Greek letter "gamma," which stands for numeral three and refers to the Trinity
Great Feasts. *See* dodekaorton

hagiasma: holy fountain, holy water, or holy spring (referring to sources of miraculous water)
hagios (Gr.): holy, sacred, saint
hegoumenos, *f.* **hegoumenissa**: superior of a monastery
hesychasm (from Gr. *hesuchia*, "calm," "peace," "recollection"): state of mind appropriate for the contemplation of God; a spiritual current that stressed the importance of achieving this state; often used in reference to those who had abandoned the world to dedicate themselves to contemplation of God and to living in solitude
hieromonk: a monk who is also a priest
himation: an outer garment originally worn by the ancient Greeks over the left shoulder and under the right; in Byzantium the dark cotton mantle worn by monks
homiliary: book of homilies
homily: sermon
horologion: liturgical book of hours, with a schedule of daily prayer
hosios (Gr.): holy, sacred, saint

icon (from Gr. *eikon*, "image"): representation of a sacred figure or event; in a narrow sense, a portable devotional panel
Iconoclasm (in relation to Byzantine art): imperially sanctioned religious movement of the eighth and ninth centuries that denied the holiness of icons and rejected icon veneration
iconophile (Gr., "image lover"): defender of icons and icon veneration, a term coined during the period of Iconoclasm
iconostasis: icon-bearing structure that separates the sanctuary from the nave in Orthodox churches. *See also* templon
idiorrhythmic (from Gr. *idiorrhythmos*, "self-regulating"): referring to an individualized form of monastic life in which monks can acquire personal property, earn income, and eat meat; *idiorrhythmic* monks are administered by an oligarchic council (*synaxis*), rather than falling under the absolute authority of a *hegoumenos*
Imago Pietatis. *See* Akra Tapeinosis
incipit (L., "[here] begins"): opening section of a manuscript, early printed book, or chanted liturgical text

katholikon: main church in a monastic complex
Koimesis (Gr., "dormition"): feast of the death (or "falling asleep") of the Virgin Mary

lection: liturgical reading drawn from the bible
lectionary: book containing *lections* to be read during liturgical services
liturgy (from Gr. *leitourgia*, "service"): ceremonial church service, most often the Eucharist
loros: a long scarf usually studded with gems, worn by an emperor or empress; the empress's loros was sometimes arranged to look like a shield, and the shieldlike part was once mistakenly believed to be a separate part termed *thorakion*

mandorla (Ital., "almond"): art historical term for the almond-shaped halo that surrounds an entire figure to indicate the presence of the divine
maniakion, *pl.* **maniakia:** a kind of neck ring or collar; indicating army rank; often an attribute to military saints
Melchite (also *Melkite*, *Mlqe*): member of the Eastern Orthodox (Chalcedonian) Church in Syria and Egypt (generally dominated by Monophysites)
Menologion, *pl.* **menologia:** collection of saints' lives arranged according to the church calendar
metropolitan: head bishop of an ecclesiastical territory that coincides with a civil province; sometimes interchangeable with *archbishop*
Monophysitism (from Gr. *monos*, "one," and *physis*, "nature"): doctrine holding that there is only one nature in Christ, not two

Nestorianism: doctrine emphasizing that Christ consists of two separate persons, one divine and one human, not one person both divine and human
neume: note or group of notes to be sung as a single syllable
nomina sacra: Christian sacred names, usually written in abbreviated form

Pantokrator (Gr., "All-sovereign"): epithet for Christ; in art, the frontal representation of a stern, dark-bearded Christ who blesses with his right hand and holds a Gospel book in his left

Pascha: Easter
paschal: relating to Easter
pendoulia or **prependoulia:** hanging ornaments on a Byzantine crown
Pentecost (Gr., "fiftieth day"): one of the twelve Great Feasts; the day of the descent of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles
pintel: pin or bolt on which a rudder or other part turns
prefiguration, or **typos** (Gr., "form" or "type"): establishment of Old Testament prototypes for New Testament figures and events
proconsul: Roman title given to a former consul (supreme magistrate) denoting governorship of special provinces
proskynesis: gesture of supplication or reverence, ranging from full prostration to genuflection, bow, or simple greeting
proskynetarion: oratory; in modern, conventional usage, denoting the monumental icon of Christ, the Virgin, or the patron saint of a church; a stand for icons

rinceau: ornament consisting of a continuous foliate scroll with spirals alternately reversing direction

semantron: long instrument made of iron, bronze, or wood, struck by a hammer to summon monks and nuns to services
skeuophylakion. *See* diakonikon
skeuophylax (Gr., "keeper of the vessels"): a cleric, usually a priest, appointed to look after the sacred valuables and liturgical vessels of a church
solidus: Byzantine gold coin
sticharion: long tunic with sleeves worn by higher ranking orders of the clergy
streptos. *See* maniakion
synaxarion: church calendar of fixed feasts with the appropriate readings from the Bible indicated for each one; can also denote a specific collection of brief notices, not always hagiographical
synaxis: an assembly, usually of monastic Fathers; Holy Council

templon: screen that separates the nave from the sanctuary
tessera, *pl.* **tesserae:** small cube used in the construction of mosaics; can be made of various materials, such as glass or stone
Theopaschitism: variant of Monophysitism; belief that God suffered in the flesh
Theotokos (Gr., "Godbearer"): epithet officially assigned to the Virgin Mary at the council of Ephesos in 431 that identifies her as the Mother of God
thorakion. *See* loros
threnos (Gr.): lament
Triodion: book of hymns for the services of the movable Lenten and Easter cycles
Trisagion (Gr., "thrice-holy [hymn]"): "Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us," a chant sung at the beginning of Eucharist and during other liturgical processions
troparion: earliest form of Byzantine hymn; originally a short prayer in rhythmic prose, later strophic and more closely connected to individual feasts; a stanza, an inserted set of lines
typos: *See* prefiguration
typikon: book delineating administrative organization and rules of behavior of a *coenobitic* monastery, including instruction for religious services

Virgin Blachernitissa: image of the Virgin and Child associated with the Blachernai church in Constantinople
Virgin Dexiokratousa (Gr., "right-handed"): variant of the Hodegetria type in which the Virgin holds the Christ child on her right arm
Virgin Eleousa (Gr., "compassionate"): image with Mary bending to tenderly touch her cheek to the cheek of the infant Christ, who puts his arm around her neck
Virgin Glykophilousa (Gr., "sweetly kissing"): term applied to the Virgin Eleousa in post-Byzantine period
Virgin Hodegetria: image of Mary holding the infant Christ on her left arm, Christ grasping a scroll in one hand and making a gesture of blessing with the other; named after the Monastery of Hodegos in Constantinople, where the earliest icon of this type was housed
Virgin Kykkotissa: Cypriot variant of the Eleousa type, in which the Christ child twists to touch Mary's cheek
Virgin Pareklesis ("Intercessor"): image type showing the Virgin almost in profile holding a scroll on which are inscribed the words of a dialogue with Christ in which the Virgin pleads for humankind
vita icon: icon with scenes of a saint's life, usually painted around a central image of the saint

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